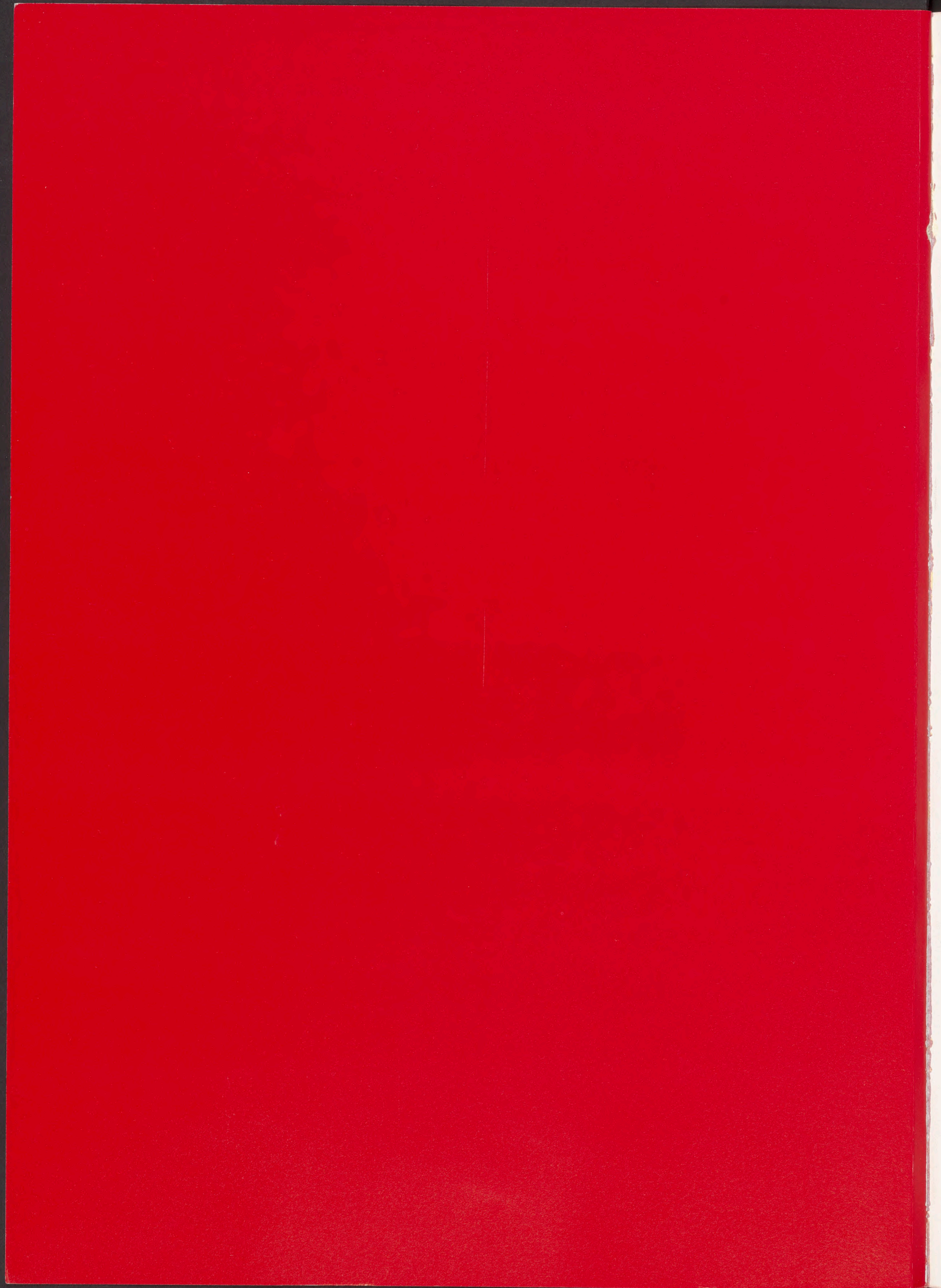




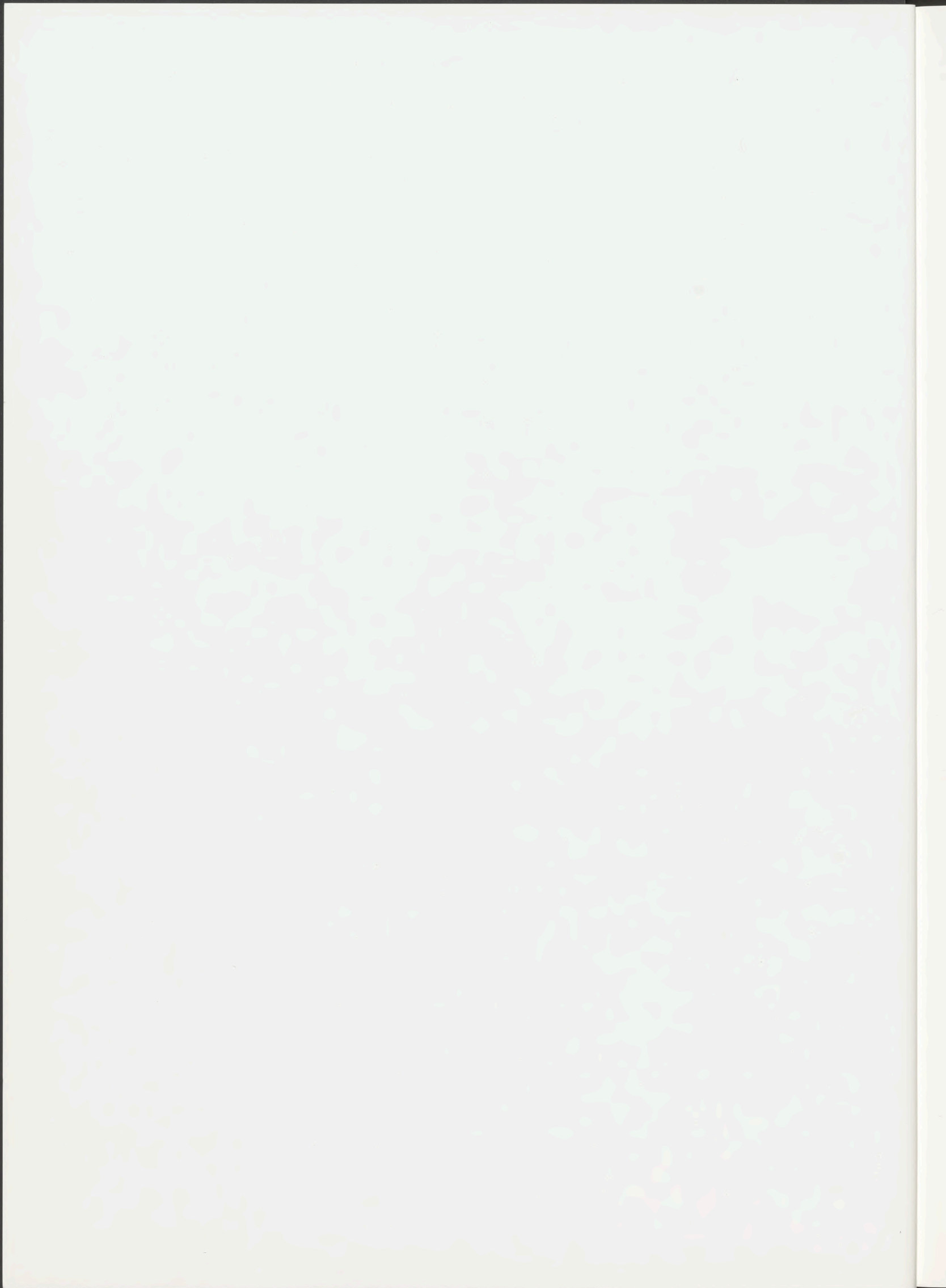
BERENICE ABBOTT

PHOTOGRAPHER:

A MODERN VISION



A M O D E R N V I S I O N



A Selection of Photographs and Essays

Edited, with Introductions and Checklist by Julia Van Haften

The New York Public Library, 1989

**B E R E N I C E   A B B O T T**

**P H O T O G R A P H E R :**

**A   M O D E R N   V I S I O N**

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*Exhibition Tour:*

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The Dallas Museum of Art

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*Information on the previous publication of Berenice Abbott's essays will be found in the credits on the next page*

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## FOREWORD

The New York Public Library takes pride in presenting an exhibition on the life and work of the master American photographer Berenice Abbott. The exhibition makes it possible for the Library not only to share Miss Abbott's well-known series of photographs of New York City, but also to display extensive examples of work from her half-century-long career, including her earliest work, as a portrait photographer in Paris during the 1920s; her New York photographs of the 1930s; her scientific photographs; works demonstrating her inventive photographic techniques; and her record of the changing face of America's Eastern seaboard.

It is particularly appropriate for the Library to produce this exhibition, for many of the key events in Miss Abbott's career are closely linked to the Library and to the development of its photographic collections. When she embarked on the major project of documenting New York City, Miss Abbott found support and encouragement from I. N. Phelps Stokes, a Library trustee, who recognized in her endeavor a continuation of his life's work of collecting and documenting the iconography of New York City. He inspired the acquisition of several hundred New York City images by The Research Libraries. Later, the curator of the Library's Picture Collection, Romana Javitz, already a friend of Abbott, began acquiring New York City and other photographs from Miss Abbott's entire oeuvre well into the 1960s.

The career of Miss Abbott—which we celebrate—is a testimony to her achievements as a visual artist and documentarian and to her accomplishments as a teacher, writer, and inventor. Responding to a need for improved scientific teaching materials for American youth in the 1950s, Miss Abbott invented new techniques for photographing scientific phenomena which significantly contributed to the revision of textbooks in the United States. As an archivist, she discovered, preserved, and brought to public attention the work of the French master photographer Eugène Atget.

Both the exhibition and this publication reflect the diligence and dedication of its curator, Julia Van Haaften. Since 1980, when the Photography Collection was designated as a section of what is now The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, Ms. Van Haaften has sought to increase the Abbott holdings through gifts and acquisitions. As a result of

her curatorial efforts on this project, she has developed a personal friendship with Berenice Abbott, whose encouragement and counsel have been crucial to the realization of the exhibition.

The New York Public Library is also indebted to Shearson Lehman Hutton for its support both of the exhibition and the publication. Beyond New York City, we plan to share these materials with other museums within the United States and with a new photography museum in Tokyo, Japan. Our plans for the national and international tours of the exhibition also reflect the commitment of Shearson Lehman Hutton to the project.

This exhibition reaffirms one of the central missions of The New York Public Library and its exhibitions program—to provide a forum for public education. The Library is committed to preserving the record of the past and making it available to all its visitors for their delight and as a means toward their lifelong continuing education.

*Timothy S. Healy*

President

The New York Public Library

*There is far too much talk about photography. Its superabundance goes into one ear and out the other. It is something you do, if you do it, not something to talk about. How does one talk about one's own breathing or sight reflexes?*

*I took to photography like a duck to water. I never wanted to do anything else. Excitement about the subject is the voltage which pushes me over the mountain of drudgery necessary to produce the final photograph.*

*Essentially there have been three major interests for me: New York of the 30s, the field of science, and Paris portraits of the 20s.*

*I returned to New York in 1929. I had been absent for a decade, so that on my return I saw the city with fresh eyes. The excitement for me was such that I could give up what by then was a flourishing portrait business in Paris. After all, I am American and New York was part of me and I was part of it. My absence gave me the objectivity required for a subject much bigger than one's self.*

*The obstacles were enormous and the expenses horrendous.*

*The challenge for me has first been to see things as they are, whether a portrait, a city street, or a bouncing ball. In a word, I have tried to be objective. What I mean by objectivity is not the objectivity of a machine, but of a sensible human being with the mystery of personal selection at the heart of it. The second challenge has been to impose order onto the things seen and to supply the visual context and the intellectual framework—that to me is the art of photography.*

*Berenice Abbott, December 1975*

## INTRODUCTION

In this 150th anniversary year of photography, it is particularly appropriate to celebrate Berenice Abbott's vigorous and committed life in photography, an artistic career that is virtually unique in the history of the medium. The accomplishments of her six decades behind the camera range from portraiture and modernist experimentation to documentation and scientific interpretation. The diversity of her contributions to the field as educator, inventor, historian, and author remains unmatched. Above all, she resolutely championed photography's singular power to apprehend realistically whatever subjects engaged her passionate vision and intellect as an artist, effectively uniting the personal and the impersonal in one penetrating body of work. Moreover, Abbott, as an independent woman, strove to participate as a professional equal in a man's world, a struggle that remains an unspoken but undeniable subtext to any understanding of her accomplishments.

Always intent on perceiving her subject as part of a larger thematic continuum, she has never photographed randomly, but always with purpose. She brings to her self-made artistic tasks a deeply intense feeling for the textures and immediacy of the material world informed by a profound appreciation of the documentary role of the works created by an insightful artist. The present exhibition and this publication are organized around the main subjects and periods of the photographer's career: *Portraits* (1920s–1950s), *New York City* (1930s–1950s), *Science* (1940s–1960), and *American Scenes* (1930s–1960s).

In addition to image-making Abbott's achievements include founding the photography program at the New School for Social Research, where she taught over twenty years; writing numerous articles, lectures, and books, including the influential *Guide to Better Photography* (1941); holding four U.S. patents for photographic and other devices; being the rescuer/archivist of the work of French master photographer Eugène Atget; and having received many honorary degrees and citations, both American and foreign, most notably the French government's Officier in the Legion of Arts and Letters, and membership in the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

For nearly fifty years The New York Public Library has acquired original photographs by Berenice Abbott, many from the artist herself. The United States History, Local History and Genealogy Division ordered a dozen

early New York views in 1940; that department also received photographs from the Federal Art Project (FAP). Romana Javitz, curator of the Picture Collection, purchased photographs from Abbott during the 1950s and 1960s; the Picture Collection also received a large gift from the "Changing New York" files of the FAP when it closed in 1943. Recent gifts from Ronald A. Kurtz have further expanded the collection's range. These important holdings—probably the largest institutional collection of Abbott's images—are the basis for the present exhibition, which demonstrates an institutional viewpoint inherently sympathetic to visual works possessing the dual capacity to function as documents for interpretation as well as works of art.

Julia Van Haften  
Curator



Born July 17, 1898, in Springfield, Ohio, Berenice Abbott came East at the age of nineteen to join the flourishing life of New York's Greenwich Village. Through her sculpture studies she met Marcel Duchamp and his friend Man Ray, and photography theorist Sadikichi Hartman, among other artists and writers; these associations further honed her appreciation of the sophisticated world of avant-garde art and ideas.

Early in 1921 she sailed for Europe, and for the next two years studied sculpture in Paris and Berlin. In 1923 she joined the fashionable Montparnasse portrait studio of Man Ray as his assistant. Taking to the work instinctively, by 1925, in a natural and evolutionary way, she was taking portrait photographs of her own. By 1926 she had her own studio, nearby on the rue du Bac. That year also saw her first solo exhibition, at the gallery "Au Sacre du Printemps"; Jean Cocteau contributed a poem to the exhibition announcement.

Abbott spent the early part of the following year studying photography in Berlin, and upon returning to Paris opened a new studio on the rue Servandoni. In 1928 she participated, with Man Ray, André Kertész, Germaine Krull, Paul Outerbridge, and others in the influential First Independent Salon of Photography, the "Salon de l'Escalier" installed on the staircase walls of the Comédie des Champs-Élysées. (The exhibition was also the first to include the work of Eugène Atget, whose archive Abbott had that year tracked down and purchased.) Notably, she was one of the few portraitists invited to participate in the influential modernist photography exhibitions of 1928 and 1929 at the Galerie de l'Epoque in Brussels, the Deutscher Werkbund's "Film + Foto" in Stuttgart, and "Fotographie der Gegenwart" (Photography of the Present), which toured Germany.

One reviewer immediately perceived the power of Abbott's cool classicism and proclaimed her portraits to be directly descended from the penetrating northern Renaissance draftsmanship of Holbein, painter to the court of Henry VIII. This apt comparison embarrassed

the unpretentious young American; yet the portraits she made in Paris during the 1920s hung in the famed Shakespeare & Co. bookshop, run by Sylvia Beach, who later wrote: "To be 'done' by Man Ray or Berenice Abbott meant you rated as somebody." Together with those taken later in New York, these portraits comprise a virtual catalogue of the artistic and intellectual life of the time. Moreover, their straightforward artistry masks the great subtlety with which they have been conceived; it is a quality linking Abbott to the great naturalist portraitists of the nineteenth century, Hill & Adamson and Nadar.

J.V.H.

Plate I  
*Marie Laurencin*  
Paris, 1926  
(checklist number 12)

### **Portraiture** *Berenice Abbott*

Portraits can be out of focus, inane, sentimental, disguised versions of the person, masquerades. Or they can be a real revelation of the person, the inner life and quality revealed through face, through pose and attitude of body, through characteristic gesture, dress, and environment.

Portraits require an even more strenuous re-education of the eye than other kinds of photography. When all is said and done, photography is essentially a medium in which the eye must be coordinated and trained to see as the lens sees, to know what it has really seen and what it wishes to express. As a dancer's muscles and grace are developed by dancing, so the photographer's ability to see creatively grows as the eye is trained and becomes ever more acute, penetrating, and inclusive. When a subject strikes a responsive visual chord, the photographer's many sets of eyes come into focus. He sees the subject itself; but at the same time he sees behind, above, in front of, and to the side of the subject simultaneously. Complex, indeed, is the vision of the trained eye.

Apply this vision to the problem of making portraits, and what do we find? The maker of great portraits will have to have a burning curiosity which probes beneath the flesh to the bone and beyond that to the soul of his sitter. He may romanticize or dramatize a person, but in no petty spirit. The essence of the portrait is humanity, its meaning, all its thoughts, emotions, characteristics. How a person's life speaks through his eyes, the modeling of his cheekbones, the weight of his body as he sits or stands, are subtle nuances, without which portraiture is mechanical and lifeless. In my portrait of Atget, I sought to evoke the weariness of this indefatigable photographer of Paris, as if the slump of his shoulders visibly symbolized the labor of thirty years tugging about his bulky 18 x 24 cm. view camera and heavy glass plates. In fact, it was a disappointment to me when he appeared at my studio dressed in his "best" suit, instead of in the patched, stained clothes I had always seen him wear before.

The qualities to be sought in portraiture are three: a good likeness, character, and spontaneity. Of course, most people indulge in a certain amount of self-deception. They imagine they want to see themselves as they really are; yet their subconscious censor shears

away double chins, warts, big ears, and such, so that their mental image is totally different from what the outsider sees, and especially from what the relentless lens registers. Here what the photographer must do is to put the sitter's best face forward, without sacrificing all identity.

(1941; excerpted from Berenice Abbott *A Guide to Better Photography*)

### **Photographer as Artist** *Berenice Abbott*

More than a hundred years have passed since Nicéphore Niépce and Louis J. M. Daguerre made the discoveries from which modern photography has evolved. In that century of experimentation and technical development, the machinery of photography has been tremendously improved, with the invention and perfection of lenses, shutters, cameras, and sensitive materials making possible photographic achievements undreamed of in the medium's early days. Faster lenses with better optical correction have resulted in ever greater speed, as have faster plates and films. Here in the compact neat box of the camera and in the precise scientific procedure of the darkroom is the real twentieth-century medium.

Speed—that is the characteristic which differentiates the twentieth century from preceding centuries. Speed of transportation, speed of communications, speed of technological evolution, speed of manufacturing processes, these tangible applied scientific expressions of speed have as their intangible psychical counterpart the speed with which history in our time has accelerated its tempo. Speed is, therefore, the first quality that the art of the twentieth century must possess. Practically, photography with its present ultimate of the f. 1.5 lens is able to catch the tangible and physical aspects of speed, by which the intangible and psychical aspects may be suggested. No other medium has this capacity for instantaneous observation, this all-seeing eye which (in comparison with the painter or draftsman) seems to function with the speed of light.

It is a cliché that nineteenth-century painting had to turn away from representationalism because the emerging technic of photography could do the representational thing far better than could the brush or pencil. In

art (by which was meant the plastic and pictorial arts, but not the photographic) there was no place left for the artist to go but toward abstract and experimental manners. Today having for the time being exhausted the exploration of these abstruse and cerebral areas, art must turn again to realism for the sustenance of solid subject matter. The trend away from romanticism, of whatever sort, whether of the emotions or of the intellect, creates the need for a medium which can deal adequately and faithfully with the complexity of twentieth-century life, which can convey with fervor and completeness the present's social and documentary emphasis.

Yet, although photography is technically equipped for its twentieth-century role, there is no general acceptance of the medium, certainly not by the lay public and regrettably often not by practitioners of the older art mediums. If anything would make an honest woman of photography, one would think it would have been the unquestioned esthetic achievements of pioneers like Nadar, David Octavius Hill, Brady, and Atget. The work of these early photographers attained a high degree of excellence, not only in a documentary sense but also in a formal sense. Their prints show, whatever the limitations of early photographic equipment, a profound concern for composition, organization of forms, and textures. By virtue of the simplicity and directness enforced on them because of the limits of nineteenth-century photographic apparatus, i.e., slowness of lenses and plates, they preserve in their work the qualities of the great pictorial tradition, arrangement within an area, occupation of two-dimensional space, etc. If photography never went beyond Atget, it would still have left enduring monuments of art.

As implied above, photography today has far greater technical capacities than it had during its first century of life. The anastigmatic lens, the compound shutter, the bellows camera, the color-sensitive film, all collaborate to widen the photographer's horizon. This self-evident truth is understood and accepted by some present-day photographers and critics. However, a wide public acceptance is necessary before photography can completely fulfil itself as the twentieth-century medium.

In the evolution of photography as an art there is a clear and continuous tradition. The early daguerreotypes (the first latent images on a sensitive emulsion) often possess that intellectual and esthetic addition

made by the artist to his subject which we say constitutes the difference between art and nature. The portraits of Nadar and of Hill, the latter originally a painter; the powerful Civil War scenes of Brady, the vast Parisian panorama of Atget, these are the sources of an authentic photographic tradition for contemporary workers in the medium. Here we have masterpieces of art equal in quality and merit to the oils, water colors, and prints of the times in which these men lived and worked. Already it has been demonstrated that photography is an art. This is all the more notable because a century is an extremely brief period of time for a new invention to achieve a form and personality of its own. Now it remains for photographers to go forward from the point reached by their nineteenth-century forebears.

In applying photography to the problems, historical and artistic, of the twentieth century, the photographer can, however, be greatly aided by a glance, even if but cursory, at the work of these pioneers who emancipated photography from its slavery to painting and thereby set the standards for it to function as an independent art. From the earliest announcements of the new chemico-physical process discovered by Daguerre and Niépce in 1839, there was an immediate appreciation of its potentialities for art. Daguerre was himself a painter and lithographer; Niépce had experimented with lithography. Thus when the scientists of Paris came to examine the new invention, it was but natural that we should find them saying, as did the physicist Dominique, and the chemist Gay-Lussac, that the most significant contribution of the daguerreotype was its "usefulness for art" and the daguerreotype was a means of "representing still life with a perfection unattainable in the usual procedure of drawing and painting, a consummateness like Nature's own."

To the scientists' enthusiasm was added that of the painter Paul Delaroche. Photography, he said, would be "of infinite service to the arts," "it so far realized certain essential requirements of art" that it would eventually "become an object of study and observation for even the most distinguished painters." Today with Siqueiros painting in duco in photographic enlargements and with every other easel painter possessing himself of a miniature camera, these are certainly words of prophecy. Delaroche's last word on the subject was: "From today, painting is dead." A few years later, the Frenchman Disderi and the Englishman Robinson wrote

treatises on "Photography as a plastic art" and sought to found an esthetics of photography.

The real fathers of photography as an art were not, however, the men who wrote critically or scientifically of its possibilities but the pioneers who utilized those possibilities, Daguerre, David Octavius Hill, Mathew Brady, Nadar (pseudonym for Gaspard Félix Tournachon), and Atget. The daguerreotypes often possess great beauty of form and quality as well as historical value. They were, nevertheless, limited, especially by the fact that but a single copy could be made. Almost simultaneously with Daguerre and Niépce, the Englishman Fox Talbot was experimenting with the camera obscura, which he first used as an aid in drawing landscapes in Italy. Ultimately he invented the calotype, printed from paper negative on silver-chloride paper. And from this invention came a notable body of work, the portraits of Hill.

In Hill's history we have an extraordinary example of how science saved a man from oblivion. A second- or third-rate painter, Hill became a master photographer. Starting his photographic career because he wanted to paint a large historical canvas of a Scottish religious assembly, an affair of some 57 square feet with 500 faces, he found himself carrying on, as it were by a miracle, the tradition of English portrait painting. His calotype portraits, ranging in tone from a delicate violet to sepia and dark brown, are a national gallery of the middle class of his time. They possess, besides their documentary significance, great formal and pictorial merit. Here we have, as we have later in Atget's case, the spectacle of an artist who seemed determined to torture himself with the limitations of his machine; for Hill never took advantage of later discoveries in lenses and processes, but continued with his simple lens, which required that sitters would have to hold a pose from three to six minutes. Here again we have the sense that these physical limitations were welded into form by the will and conscious intention of the photographer.

With Nadar also photography proved itself as a medium for portraiture. In one year, 1859, a series of inspired portraits came from his studio, representing the whole intellectual life of Paris—Berlioz, Ciceri, Daumier, Doré, Gautier, Guizot, Millet, Philippon, and many others.

But it remained for other men to widen the field of photography, notably the American Brady, best known for his Civil War scenes. A boy of 16 he had begun his experiments in the same year that Niépce's and Daguerre's invention was announced. At 19 he set up a studio at the corner of Broadway and Fulton; and his portraits quickly won him fame, as well as blue ribbons at various world's fairs. In 1850 he published "A Gallery of Illustrious Americans," equally successful. In 1855 he took up the newly invented wet plate process and widened his business activities, opening a second studio in New York and one in Washington. It was the financial proceeds of this very American enterprising which enabled Brady to make his really remarkable photographs of the Civil War. He bankrupted himself in this adventure. But the world is richer by the first great documentary photographic record, though unfortunately the archives of the War Department in Washington is scarcely the place for a national artistic monument.

Here photography had reached out to picture the world of action. There was no posing of dead men, no stage setting for battle scenes. It was reality he photographed, the objective world, a world which in this case happened to be a world of war and death. Here in a sense was the birth of the moving picture, the emerging mood which made it necessary for science to create ever faster and faster photographic apparatus with which to capture the accelerating tempo of history.

Atget, coming a quarter of a century later, did not find himself confronted with war as his theme. His theme was society, its façades and bourgeois interiors, its incredible contrasts and paradoxes. It was the vast scope of this world, the changing nineteenth-century world, that Atget sought to imprison in his photographs. Because of the extreme sensitiveness and beauty of his conception, one cannot but state unequivocally that in the creation of the tradition for photography no one man has played a greater part.

Eugène Atget died in 1927, for all practical purposes unknown and unsung. Working for over 30 years with primitive equipment critically handicapped by lack of funds, Atget nevertheless produced a vast bulk of work, the most beautiful photographs yet made. Armed with a crude *dix-huit et vingt-quatre* camera,

heavier and less compact than the standard 8 × 10 of today, having only one lens, a rectilinear which gave depth of focus at the cost of loss of speed, Atget worked within the limits of his machinery, transmuting these very limitations into positive esthetic virtues, whether by intuition or by conscious intention we cannot dogmatically state. However, the internal evidence of his prints leaves no doubt that he was a great master.

A provincial actor till he was 40, Atget set himself up in Paris with a shingle which read "Documents pour artistes." Since he was almost totally unrecognized in his lifetime, it is hard to speak with authority of his real motives and ideas; he did not speak, in his old age, of what he sought in his work; he only did the work and left it to speak for itself and him; and indeed, his work is the best source book for knowledge of his principles. One cannot say, therefore, whether this sign contained an ironic note as well as a utilitarian one. The fact remains that many well-known Parisian artists did buy photographs from Atget, to include them as details in their canvasses, among their number being men as far apart in their styles as Utrillo and Braque.

The sale of documents for artists was, however, only an incidental occupation for Atget. His real business, after he belatedly found his metier, was to create an incomparable photographic portrait of Paris, its architectural monuments, its palaces, its fountains and grilles, its markets and street-vendors, its "boutiques" and brothels, its petit-bourgeois interiors and rag-pickers' huts, trees in the parks of St. Cloud and Versailles, plows and peasants' carts in the outskirts of the city. To carry on this work, Atget was compelled to sell his photographs for a few francs apiece—when he could—thereby securing funds to buy more plates and printing paper. But, from the fury and passion with which he devoted himself to his self-appointed task, it is clear he knew very well in the depths of his own heart that he was creating a body of work of great value and importance. In his old age he was a silent man, who did not expose either his work or his heart to the world. But he worked away unrelentlessly, producing thousands of photographs which except for a miracle would have been lost to the future.

One cannot say of Atget that his work has influenced contemporary photography to any great extent. His

work was barely known when he died a decade ago; it is little known now, unfortunately. Yet the values that control his creative effort are standards which should be basic in that tradition for twentieth-century photography of which we are speaking. These values are a relentless fidelity to fact, a deep love of the subject for its own sake, a profound feeling for materials and surfaces and textures, a conscience intent on permitting the subject photographed to live by virtue of its own form and life, rather than by the false endowment of memory or sentimental association.

To carry these principles into effect, Atget used legitimate devices of the artist. Distortion, not in a self-conscious intellectual fashion, but in an intuitive and visual sense, was one of these devices. Plainly Atget deliberately makes use in some of his pictures of the distortion forced upon him by the inadequacy of his one lens, a rectilinear which (while it gave great sharpness of definition to his images) had many shortcomings, such as lack of coverage, curvature of the field, and lack of speed. But aside from this rationalization of his handicaps, Atget had a strong esthetic awareness, manifested for example in the way in which his photographs express the very air of Paris, gray and moist. Here he presented a physical fact which had a wider significance than the mere visually observed object; only through selection of such significant facts can the artist create reality; and this reality Atget did indeed create in his work, which becomes thereby the demonstration of photography as art and the foundation of the tradition for photography.

(1936; reprinted from *Art Front*)



Plate 2  
*James Joyce*  
Paris, 1928  
(checklist number 5)

Plate 3  
*Edna St. Vincent Millay*  
New York, ca. 1930  
(checklist number 3)





Plate 4

*Eugène Atget*

Paris, 1927

(checklist number 4)

Plate 5

*Hands of Jean Cocteau*

Paris, 1927

(checklist number 8)





Plate 6  
*Buddy Gilmore*  
Paris, 1927  
(checklist number 1)

Plate 7  
*Huddie Ledbetter*  
(Leadbelly)  
New York, late 1940s  
(checklist number 11)

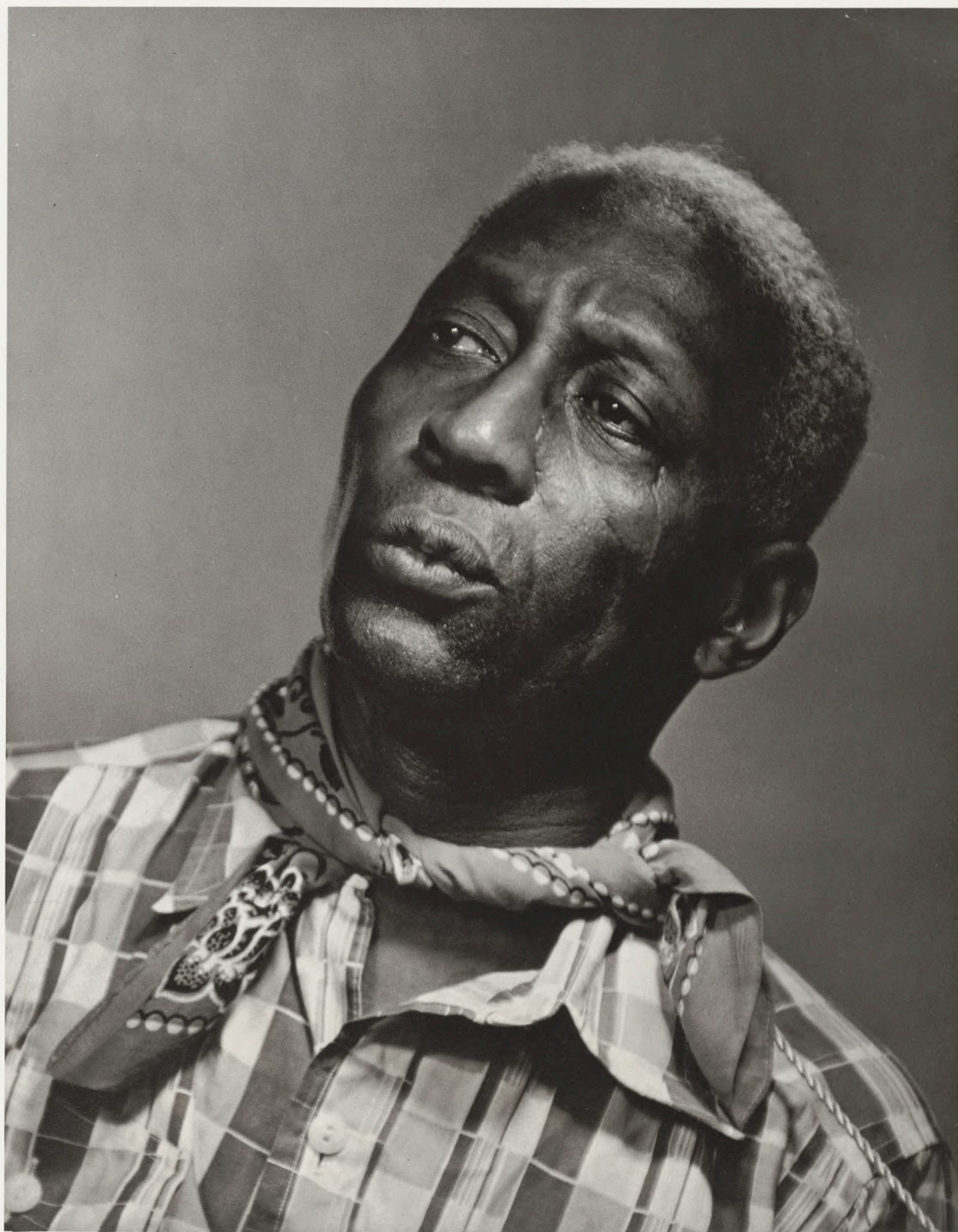




Plate 8  
*Tempo of the City I: Fifth  
 Avenue and 44th Street,  
 Manhattan*  
 May 13, 1938  
 (checklist number 125)

Returning to New York early in 1929 after an absence of nearly a decade, Abbott was stunned by the social and physical transformation of the city she had once called home. Eager for a new arena in which to express her developing aesthetic, she left Paris for good and moved back across the Atlantic. Instinctively comprehending the extent to which Eugène Atget's photography was an artistic as well as an historical legacy, she brought with her the entire archive of his prints and negatives that she had purchased the year before. This elemental act of rescue began a demanding and often frustrating vocation as Atget's archivist and champion that lasted until the Museum of Modern Art purchased the collection in 1968.

Armed with an international reputation as a classical portraitist, Abbott continued her commercial work with assignments from *Fortune*. Allied intellectually with the modernist, or experimentalist, European photography of the time, she began visually to explore the city's transitory visage. Using her small camera as if to sketch, she started an album of dynamic abstract compositions as well as visual notations of storefronts, façades, and views that interested her. In 1932 she took up an 8-x-10-inch view camera, her standard equipment for nearly the rest of her career.

By now her desire to photograph the city had turned into a project, but she was unable to secure funding despite the support of several civic cultural leaders. These included Harding Scholle, Director of the recently founded Museum of the City of New York, architect Philip Johnson of the not much older Museum of Modern Art, and New York Public Library trustee and historical print collector I. N. Phelps Stokes, whose *Iconography of Manhattan Island* (1915-28) demonstrated his understanding of the dual artistic and documentary value of the work Abbott sought to complete.

By the mid-1930s the effects of the Depression had led the government to include artists and related workers among the recipients of unemployment relief. Abbott successfully applied to the Federal Art Project (FAP) of the Works Progress Administration to carry out "Changing New York," and in the fall of 1935 began the work that occupied her for the next three years. As grand in its scheme as the Farm Security Administration's History Section under Roy Stryker (the other

great documentary photography survey of the 1930s), "Changing New York" is notable for being the creation of a single visionary photographer.

A book of the same title, with text by art critic Elizabeth McCausland, was commercially published in 1939, and the project drew to a close. It had amassed well over 300 documented negatives and a wealth of supplementary research produced by a small band of out-of-work draftsmen, writers, and researchers also employed by the FAP. Except for images made in 1948 for a book on Greenwich Village and some re-photography in the 1950s of favorite sites, Abbott made no other photographs of the city.

J.V.H.

## Changing New York\* Berenice Abbott

\*This essay incorporates the texts of two separate drafts. The FAP was the Federal Art Project.

\*\*Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes. *Iconography of Manhattan Island: 1498 to 1909* 6 vols. (New York: R.H. Dodd, 1915–28).

"To photograph New York City" is the definition of this sub-project of the WPA/FAP. The original plan stated that the purpose of such a photographic enterprise would be "to preserve for the future an accurate and faithful chronicle in photographs of the changing aspect of the world's greatest metropolis." In this mood the project has been carried out since it was approved in August 1935.

"To photograph New York City," I stated more fully in the plan, "means to seek to catch in the sensitive photographic emulsion the spirit of the metropolis, while remaining true to its essential fact, its hurrying tempo, its congested streets, the past jostling the present. The concern is not with the architectural rendering of detail, the buildings of 1935 overshadowing all else, but with a synthesis which shows the skyscraper in relation to the less colossal edifices which preceded it: city vistas, waterways, highways, and means of transportation: areas where peculiarly urban aspects of human living can be observed: city squares where the trees die for lack of sun and air: narrow and dark canyons where visibility fails because there is no light: litter blowing along a waterfront slip: relics of the age of General Grant and Queen Victoria where these have survived the onward march of the steam shovel—all these things and many more comprise New York City in 1935. And it is these aspects that should be photographed."

It was a firm conviction I held about this idea, because it was an idea nurtured a long time. In March 1929, I had come to New York from Paris, where I had made my home for almost ten years and where I had been doing portrait photography for several years with considerable success. The trip was to be just a short visit. But when I saw New York again, I felt that here was the thing I had been wanting to do all my life, photograph New York City. That was the birth of the idea of the project "Changing New York."

So back to Paris, to wind up my affairs there. And back again to the United States with feverish excitement. But 1929 was not a year for anyone to start new enterprises. Financial backing for anything went out of fashion when the fat boom years ended, and the lean years of Depression came. I had from the beginning sought to interest various people and institutions in the

plan to photograph New York City. The first person I saw was I. N. Phelps Stokes, the distinguished iconographer of Manhattan Island.\*\* He has always been unfailingly cooperative and interested in the idea. In 1930 I sent a long plan both to the Museum of the City of New York and to the New-York Historical Society. Both were sympathetic. But private patrons had other uses for their funds then, as I discovered in 1932 when I sent out several hundred letters asking for subscriptions. One contribution for \$50 was received.

The years went on, and the fantastic passion for New York continued to obsess me. As far as time and finances permitted, I photographed the city on my own, building up the "chronicle in photographs" which I was always hoping could be carried out on a larger and more complex scale. Early in October 1934, a selection of these photographs was shown at the Museum of the City of New York and proved of such great interest to the public that the exhibition was held over several months after its original month was ended. Previously my New York photographs had been exhibited at the opening of the Museum's new building in 1932, several times at the Julien Levy Gallery, and in Paris, San Francisco, Boston, Hartford, Springfield, etc., where the response was enthusiastic. It was plain from these exhibitions that there is a real popular demand for such a photographic record.

But the Depression continued. And art patrons continued in hiding. The enterprise could go on only in partial and very limited terms, because photography costs money, for supplies, for equipment, for the living expenses of the photographer. Moreover to carry out this idea in the most efficient and intelligent way, technical help was needed, both in the field and in the darkroom, as was further explained in the project's original prospectus. Moreover a tremendous amount of collateral research should be done in order that the photographs might achieve the fullest possible documentary value. The aesthetic factor depended, of course, on the artist; but the historical needed further factual data.

Such is the background of the project to photograph New York City. It is important to recite this current history because the experience is typical of many of the enterprises now being carried on by the Federal Art Project. Many creative workers have gone through the same cycle of hope, delay, and frustration, because

there was no practical social support for their work. And many have found in government patronage the aid they needed to continue their creative development. Thus, since the photographic sub-project, "Changing New York," got under way, in September 1935, I have had the experience which is a healthy part of every artist's growth: the more you do, the more you realize how much there is to do, what a vast subject the metropolis is, and how the work of photographing it could go on forever.

The capturing of the vanishing instant cannot be hurried. The work must be done deliberately, in order that the artist actually will set down in the sensitive and delicate photographic emulsion the soul of the city. Haste is always damaging to the creative process; and particularly in photographing a great city where the photographer must set up the camera in crowded streets or on dangerously precipitous roof-tops, rickety fire-escapes with broken steps, streets where there is tremendous vibration of trucks, elevators, subways, streets where the winds blow with fury down the narrow canyons, sometimes toppling over the camera. Here sufficient time must be taken to produce an expressive result in which moving details must coincide with balance of design and significance of subject.

For over three years the "Changing New York" project has been at work. The field is by no means exhausted, and never can be as long as the city continues to be and to change. However, the many public uses to which the photographs have been put (besides the use originally defined, namely, to be a part of the permanent collections of the Museum of the City of New York and similar historical depositories) prove the immediate as well as the ultimate value of the documentary photographic record.

(1939; excerpted from *Art for the Masses*)

## Documenting the City *Berenice Abbott*

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"Men come together in cities in order to live," wrote Aristotle.

Truly the city reflects life at its greatest intensity, for it represents the most powerful, complex, coordinated, and dynamic structure of civilization. In its nexus all forces of contemporary society unite. Its facilities for dwelling, traveling, eating, recreation are keyed to the highest pitch of sensation. In the city, modern life's complexities are accentuated, exaggerated, heightened to unbearable tension. No other theme is as compelling for the photographer who seeks to express life today.

The city has the romantic power of its dreadful reality. Its pull is deeper than sentiment or history. The city is life, whose terms of daily experience must be translated into order and meaning. Balzac wrote of Paris what is true of all cities:

"Monstrous marvel . . . astounding assemblage of brains and machinery in motion . . . City of a Hundred Thousand Romances . . . head of the world . . . A monster, indeed, is the great city . . . Oh! what a life of incessant activity the monster leads! . . . Who has not marveled at thy dark passages, thy fitful gleams of light, thy deep, soundless blind alleys? . . . There are streets . . . which have lost their character as hopelessly as a man guilty of some shameful action; there are likewise noble streets, streets that are simply honest and nothing more . . . The streets . . . possess human qualities, so that you cannot help forming certain ideas of them on first impression . . . Students, thinkers, poets, and men of pleasure, who know the art of walking the streets . . . reap a harvest of delights borne in on the tides of life that ebb and flow within her walls with every hour."

All cities are monsters in this sense, yet capable of profound delights. To make the portrait of a city is a life work, and no one portrait suffices because the city is always changing. Everything in the city is properly part of its story—its physical body of brick, stone, steel, glass, wood, its lifeblood of living, breathing men and women. Streets, vistas, panoramas, bird's-eye views and worm's-eye views, the noble and the shameful, high life and low life, tragedy, comedy, squalor; wealth, the mighty towers of skyscrapers, the ignoble façades of slums, people at work, people at home, people at

play—these are but a small part of the subject matter of the city. Nothing is too humble for the camera portraitist.

Cities are as old as stable social forms. Imperial Rome at its height numbered a million citizens. Yet the city as we know it is peculiarly a phenomenon of the modern world. Not till 1920 did urban populations tip the scale in the United States. From the Civil War dates the great growth of cities in our country. In 1860 cities which today boast 150,000 population or over totaled 3,782,054 people; today they total 30,305,204. This is the great migration of modern times, the creation of a new *form* for mankind. The new form shares the qualities of its age. Essentially the city is hard and real, fabricated from unyielding materials, in contrast with which natural growths are tender and soft. The city's character must have a physical counterpart in photographs, truthfully to re-create the city for future time. The city, therefore, must be photographed as through a microscope, if photographs of the *now* are to have any value for the future. Photographs of the city must be as sharp and detailed as machine age equipment permits. Documents are needed, rich with minute detail—not prettified pictures. The city is hard and real. It expresses itself through thousands of physical objects. Buildings, rows of houses, whole streets disappear. These material forms of the city have existed in relation to corners, skylines, other streets. If the growth and change of the city is to be visualized with historical value, the future should be able to examine extinct sites and learn what they were like, how progress altered them. Otherwise, how can we reconstruct the past, that *now* which is never the same but changes from day to day?

#### *Choosing Subjects*

Selection makes the photographer a true historian. He must know what to photograph and what not to photograph, to give meaning to his visual chronicle of civilization. It is not enough to record what exists today; the photographer must make his document significant. Here the artist is needed, for form and composition emphasize the drama of the contemporary city.

First, select material which is appropriate to photography. For many themes belong to literature rather than to the camera. As I have photographed New York City, people have suggested a variety of subjects for consideration. On examination, I found that the great

majority did not lend themselves to photography at all. One can write an interesting history of some buildings which are trite and nondescript. They are not funny, noble, dignified, picturesque—they are simply commonplace. In a word, they are not photogenic.

The photographic historian must select subjects which appeal to the *visual* sense. He must discriminate between pictorial material which is suitable for the painter and that which is suitable for the photographer. Color and atmosphere are primarily qualities of painting. Remember that photography means "drawing with light." Drawing is based on the solid linear relations of blacks and whites. The precision, the exactitude of graphic art is the great beauty of the photograph. It is this appropriateness which we mean when we use the word photogenic.

The only exception to the rule that the photographer must be guided by his visual sense has to do with important historical subjects, which are sometimes uninteresting to look at but which need to be included in the record. The first apartment house in New York City on East 18th Street is by no means a beautiful edifice. But it has historical interest, as representing the beginnings of modern cooperative dwelling.

If the photographer is not trained in history and architecture, he should at least have an intuition of the past, present, and future. His eyes should be antennae for the significant forms of life about him. He should have, too, an understanding of the interplay of forces in the world today, how history affects his daily life and how it alters the face of his city. He should have a warm love of his theme, approach it with a passionate antiquarianism, a vast sympathy for the people who make cities and live in them. By emotional identification of himself with the destinies of his fellow city dwellers, he will be able to evoke the humor, the human tragedy of life so that it comes through the apparently adamant shell of concrete.

#### *Aspects of the City*

As no two people are alike, or no two epochs, or no two leaves in nature, neither are two cities alike. Geographically, cities differ; in time and development they differ. Extremes of difference are races, colors, dialects, customs. American cities are said to be more standardized than any others in the world. But since the American examples of *homo sapiens* do not differ

essentially from the human species elsewhere in the world, I fail to see the truth in this charge. What could be more different in character than Boston and New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore—a few miles apart?

Some cities are tawdry, some are charming, some quaint, some dignified. All have characters of their own. There are ghost cities and boom towns, cities whose municipal bonds are good risks and those whose are not; there are mushroom cities, cities which reverberate with history. The character of a city takes on external attributes from its terrain, as Pittsburgh on its hills or Boston near open sea differ from St. Louis by the Mississippi. To sense the personality of his city is the photographer's task. The photographer of cities needs many kinds of knowledge, besides how to operate the camera. Familiarity with many cities gives him a measuring stick for the particular city he is photographing. For example, Atget had traveled, acted, and photographed. He brought to Paris a special dramatic sense, so that truly to him the city was "a stage and all the men and women merely actors."

Why the city was founded, what its principal industries and activities are, its historical periods and architectural developments, are things the photographer should know, so that he can place a given subject in its context. For the history of architecture is perhaps the surest external index to an epoch.

We must love the city to photograph it well. But like loving one's native land or one's family, we are critical of them and want to be proud of them. Therefore where sections of the city offend our *amour propre*, we should photograph these also, in the hope of improving them by pointing the need for correction. Photographs made in 1871 by W.H. Jackson in the Yellowstone region convinced Congress that that section of the West was so beautiful it should be set apart as a national park. Today photographers sufficiently oriented in their choice of subject matter can cooperate with city planning groups for the improvement of the city, pointing out eyesores, unsanitary places where children play, filthy streets, airless and lightless dwellings. For who knows the city better than the photographer who has roamed its streets, minutely sorting out motley themes, noting the many disgraces permitted to flourish? The anarchistic *unplanning* of our cities is certainly a major part of the story to be told about them for future ages.

#### Shell

In photographing the city, there are first the architectural forms—the material, external form of the city. Outstanding buildings which are characteristic should be photographed—whether they are quaint, curious, beautiful, or just plain monstrous. Yet historical buildings as such are not always a significant choice. Landmarks or sections which are soon to be demolished should be included. Rows of houses produce the cumulative effect of their monotony, or have the value of contrast between old and new. Vistas along streets are valuable as showing the nature of the urban environment. Remember that Da Vinci said in his city plan, "Let the street be as wide as the height of the houses." In cities of our time his rule is more honored in the breach than in the observance. A fact like this, indicated in unmistakable visual terms, serves as a standard by which the future can evaluate the civilization of the twentieth century.

Visual truth should present the poverty and wealth, misery and triumph of the city. Fine old doorways speak of the magnificence of a former generation. Today architecture imposes more by mass than by detail, so that another presentation must be made. Though New York opposes the filthy, ugly streets of the East Side to broad avenues of high rents, yet even these tell a story not completely lovely. How pathetic are the wisps of trees which the wealthy can boast. What happens to human beings who must perforce live among such surroundings? The portrait of the city should have these facts too.

Nor can commonplace subjects be ignored. In fact they tell more about a community than its more publicized features. Toolshops, garages, grocery stores, bakeries are significant of a period. Certainly a Super A&P store is something our grandmothers would have marveled at; and our grandchildren may well feel the same wonder. Most of the tools and objects, even the instruments we eat with, will some day appear primitive and even ludicrous. Vehicles of transportation change rapidly and vividly symbolize the history of men's inventions. . . .

(1942; excerpted from *The Complete Photographer*)



Plate 9  
*New York at Night. Empire  
State Building, 350 Fifth  
Avenue, West Side, 34th  
and 33rd Streets (General  
View North), Manhattan  
ca. 1932  
(checklist number 43)*

Plate 10  
*City Arabesque: From Roof  
of 60 Wall Tower,  
Manhattan  
June 9, 1938  
(checklist number 123)*





Plate 11  
*Steam + Felt = Hats,*  
 65 West 39th Street,  
 Manhattan  
 March 1, 1938  
 (checklist number 114)

Plate 12  
*Stone and William Streets,*  
 Manhattan  
 May 12, 1936  
 (checklist number 82)





Plate 13  
*General View: From the  
 Penthouse, 56 Seventh  
 Avenue, Manhattan*  
 July 14, 1937  
 (checklist number 107)

Plate 14  
*Columbus Circle,  
 Manhattan*  
 February 10, 1936  
 (checklist number 69)





Plate 15  
*"El," Second and Third  
 Avenue Lines; Hanover  
 Square and Pearl Street,  
 Manhattan*  
 March 6, 1936  
 (checklist number 72)

Plate 16  
*George Washington Bridge,  
 Riverside Drive and 179th  
 Street, Manhattan*  
 January 17, 1936  
 (checklist number 66)





Plate 17  
*Manhattan Bridge:*  
*Looking Up*  
 November 11, 1936  
 (checklist number 93)

Plate 18  
*Triborough Bridge,*  
*Manhattan: Steel Girders*  
 June 29, 1937  
 (checklist number 102)





Plate 19  
*Pike and Henry Streets,  
 Manhattan*  
 March 6, 1936  
 (checklist number 71)

Plate 20  
*Rockefeller Plaza: Structural  
 Detail of the RCA Building*  
 1931/32  
 (checklist number 41)

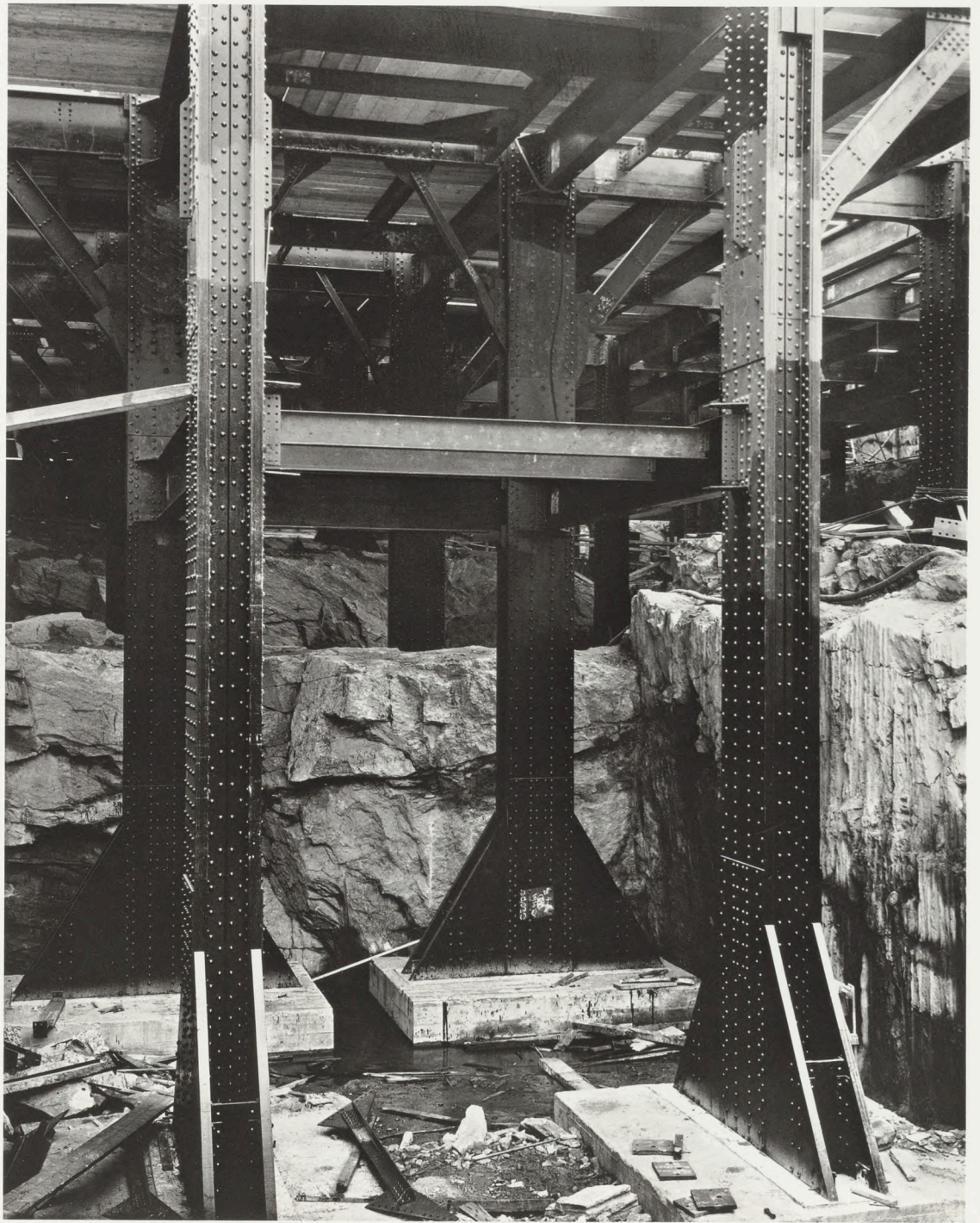




Plate 21  
*Father Duffy, Times Square,  
 Manhattan*  
 April 14, 1937  
 (checklist number 108)

Plate 22  
*John Watts Statue: From  
 Trinity Churchyard. Looking  
 toward One Wall Street,  
 Manhattan*  
 February 1, 1938  
 (checklist number 113)





Plate 23  
 Chicken Market,  
 55 Hester Street,  
 Manhattan  
 February 11, 1937  
 (checklist number 99)

Plate 24  
 Court of the First Model  
 Tenement in New York City,  
 1325-1343 First Avenue,  
 Manhattan  
 March 16, 1936  
 (checklist number 73)







Plate 25  
Rothman's Pawn Shop, 149  
Eighth Avenue, Manhattan  
May 18, 1938  
(checklist number 115)

Plate 26  
Blossom Restaurant, 103  
Bowery, Manhattan  
October 24, 1935  
(checklist number 59)



Plate 27  
 Newsstand, Southwest  
 Corner of 32nd Street and  
 Third Avenue, Manhattan  
 November 19, 1935  
 (checklist number 56)

Plate 28  
 Automat, 977 Eighth  
 Avenue, Manhattan  
 February 10, 1936  
 (checklist number 68)





Plate 29  
Fourth Avenue, no. 154,  
Brooklyn  
October 29, 1936  
(checklist number 95)

Plate 30  
Department of Docks and  
Police Station, Pier A, North  
River, Manhattan  
May 5, 1936  
(checklist number 77)





Plate 31  
 Warehouse, Water  
 and Dock Streets, Brooklyn  
 May 22, 1936  
 (checklist number 76)

Plate 32  
 Fifth Avenue, nos. 4, 6, 8,  
 Manhattan  
 March 6, 1936  
 (checklist number 74)







Plate 33  
 Ferry, West 23rd Street,  
 Manhattan  
 December 23, 1935  
 (checklist number 64)

Plate 34  
 "El" Station Interior, Sixth  
 and Ninth Avenue Lines,  
 Downtown Side, Columbus  
 Avenue and 72nd Street,  
 Manhattan  
 February 6, 1936  
 (checklist number 67)



Plate 35  
 Country Store: Interior, Ewen  
 Avenue, Spuyten Duyvil, NY  
 October 11, 1935  
 (checklist number 55)

Plate 36  
 Gasoline Station, Tremont  
 Avenue and Dock Street,  
 Bronx  
 July 2, 1936  
 (checklist number 86)





Plate 37  
[Bird's Wing, Supersight]  
late 1940s  
(checklist number 136)

Seeking a new challenge for her talents and energy, Abbott determined that science was the phenomenon of the age most in need of interpretation. From 1939 until the 1960s her major preoccupation was picturing scientific principles and phenomena through photography. In the 1940s, as picture editor for *Science Illustrated*, she often resourcefully devised her own equipment and techniques to obtain the images she wanted. She also founded a commercial firm, The House of Photography, to market her inventions, and developed her extraordinary Supersight process, a system of direct photography onto 16-x-20-inch negatives which when contact-printed produce virtually grainless images. A proposed book of these photographs, with poems by Muriel Rukeyser, was never published.

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At last, in 1958 Abbott's vision for science found a receptive audience when she joined the Physical Science Study Committee, a team of scientists and educators working at M.I.T. to complete a new high school curriculum that would teach basic principles of physics through meaningful experiments and eloquent explanations. Her role was to provide or create the required expository photographs.

Engineering her own set-ups and engaging the talents of her colleagues, Abbott made images of graphic purity that not only picture the phenomena under discussion but also communicate with a photogenic realism peripheral information about the nature of light, the wave force, and magnetism. Even before the P.S.S.C.'s seminal textbook, *Physics*, appeared in 1960, Abbott's images were widely exhibited in schools and museums, often providing viewers with their first introduction to the world of fine photography. In the 1960s and 1970s, Evans G. Valens compiled several books for young people utilizing these photographs.

J.V.H.

**Photography and Science** *Berenice Abbott*

We live in a world made by science. But we—the millions of laymen—do not understand or appreciate the knowledge which thus controls daily life.

To obtain wide popular support for science, to that end that we may explore this vast subject even further and bring as yet unexplored areas under control, there needs to be a friendly interpreter between science and the layman.

I believe that photography can be this spokesman, as no other form of expression can be; for photography, the art of our time, the mechanical, scientific medium which matches the pace and character of our era, is attuned to the function. There is an essential unity between photography, science's child, and science, the parent.

Yet so far the task of photographing scientific subjects and endowing them with popular appeal and scientific correctness has not been mastered. The function of the artist is needed here, as well as the function of the recorder. The artist through history has been the spokesman and conservator of human and spiritual energies and ideas. Today science needs *its* voice. It needs the vivification of the visual image, the warm human quality of imagination added to its austere and stern disciplines. It needs to speak to the people in terms they will understand. They can understand photography pre-eminently.

To me, this function of photography seems extraordinarily urgent and exciting. Scientific subject matter may well be the most thrilling of today. My hope of moving into this new field comes logically in my own evolution as a photographer.

(1939; excerpted from an unpublished statement)

## The Image of Science *Berenice Abbott*

Scientists are working with dedication—and, yes, even joy—at the Physical Science Study Committee organized in 1956 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and now at its own organization called Educational Services Incorporated. This includes a group of men and women, among them some of the nation's foremost physicists and high school physics teachers who have banded together with other specialists in many areas of communication, including the photographer, to present physics to high school students in as effective a way as possible.

Some of the scientists are often "artistic" and quite poetic although these very ones may be the most apathetic, even disdainful, of art, to say nothing of fearful—or just plain untrained. Yet, their intuition can match the artist's any day. I cannot altogether blame them for their fear. However, it cannot be denied that the visual image is a powerful tool in educational matters or that science sorely needs all the visual clarification at its disposal. And what other medium can potentially surpass photography in this mission?

Often when people speak of science and art, little or no mention is made of photography, the medium pre-eminently qualified to unite art with science. Photography was born in the years which ushered in the scientific age, an offspring of both science and art. While unbelievably young as a medium it, too, will mature. My interest at Educational Services Incorporated is to explore the possibility of this partnership.

Such an exploration is like a voyage between Scylla and Charybdis. What course should be taken? Where is emphasis placed? Can Science and Art unite?

My own conviction is that not only is this possible—it is necessary. We have all seen pretty enough designs abstracted more or less from scientific subjects, but this is mere by-play. This should not be confused with an accurate portrait of scientific phenomena nor should it be the unimaginative record so often used in the field. However, emphasis is inescapably on scientific clarity, at the expense of poetic license if necessary.

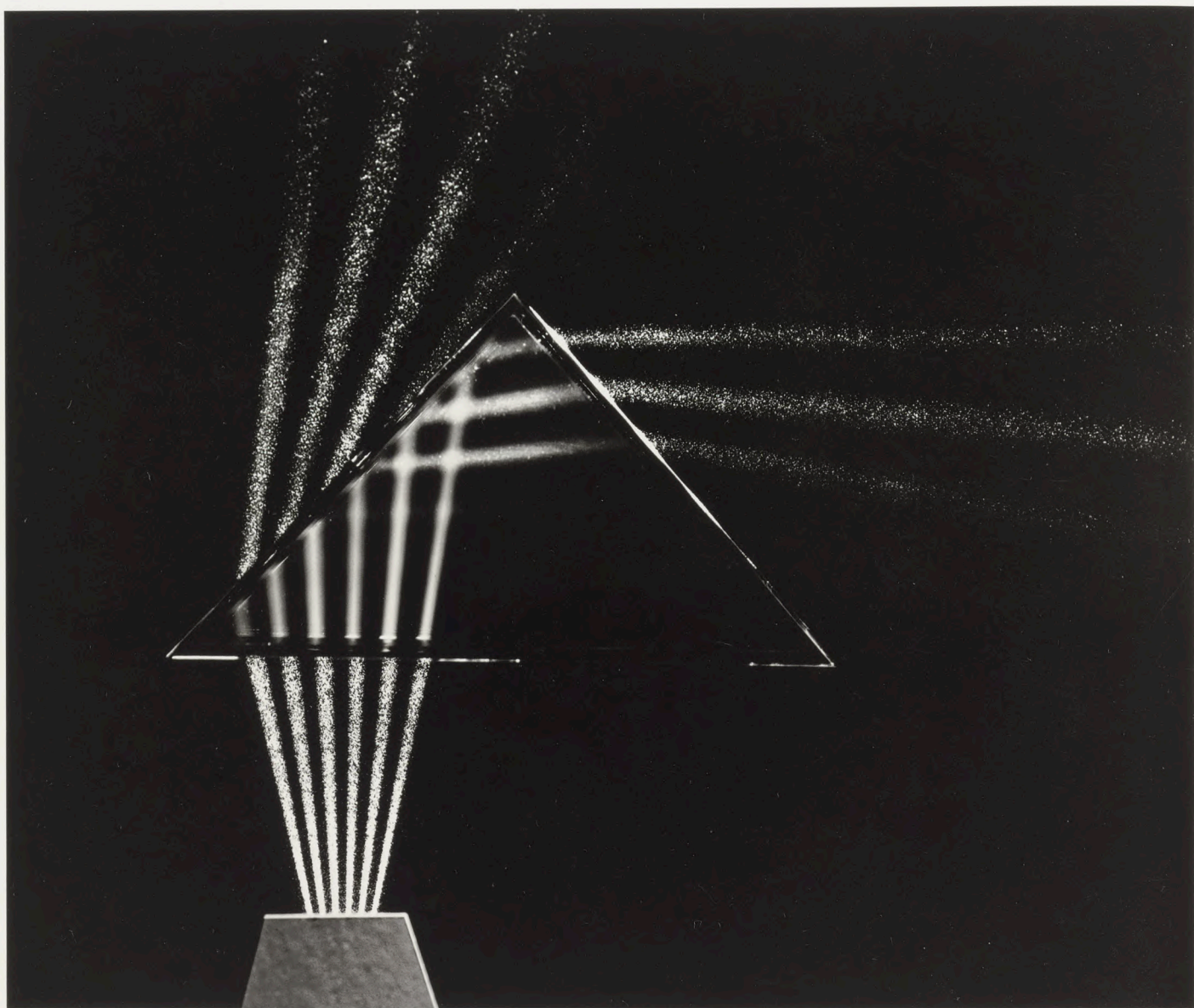
Indeed, the more clearly the photographer expresses the scientific truth involved, sometimes in its most unesthetic facet or most attractive homeliness, the

better he succeeds in his mission and the nearer he approaches the goal of communication and, perhaps, art. A simple *statement* of science in visual terms should not be confused with the *idea* of a mere abstract design.

The subject of physics with its order and infinite reality does not blink at the realistic image, nor does the scientist. But to today's artist "the realistic image" is a many-headed demon which sends him into headlong flight. Why? Here in physics is primal order and balance; its universal implications extend limitlessly. Both scientists and artists are humble before its reason and proportion. Both try simply and faithfully to express the subject. Both must know above all else how to let the subject speak for itself.

Surely, scientific truth and natural phenomena are as good subjects for art as are man and his emotions, in their infinite variety.

(1959; reprinted from *Art in America*)



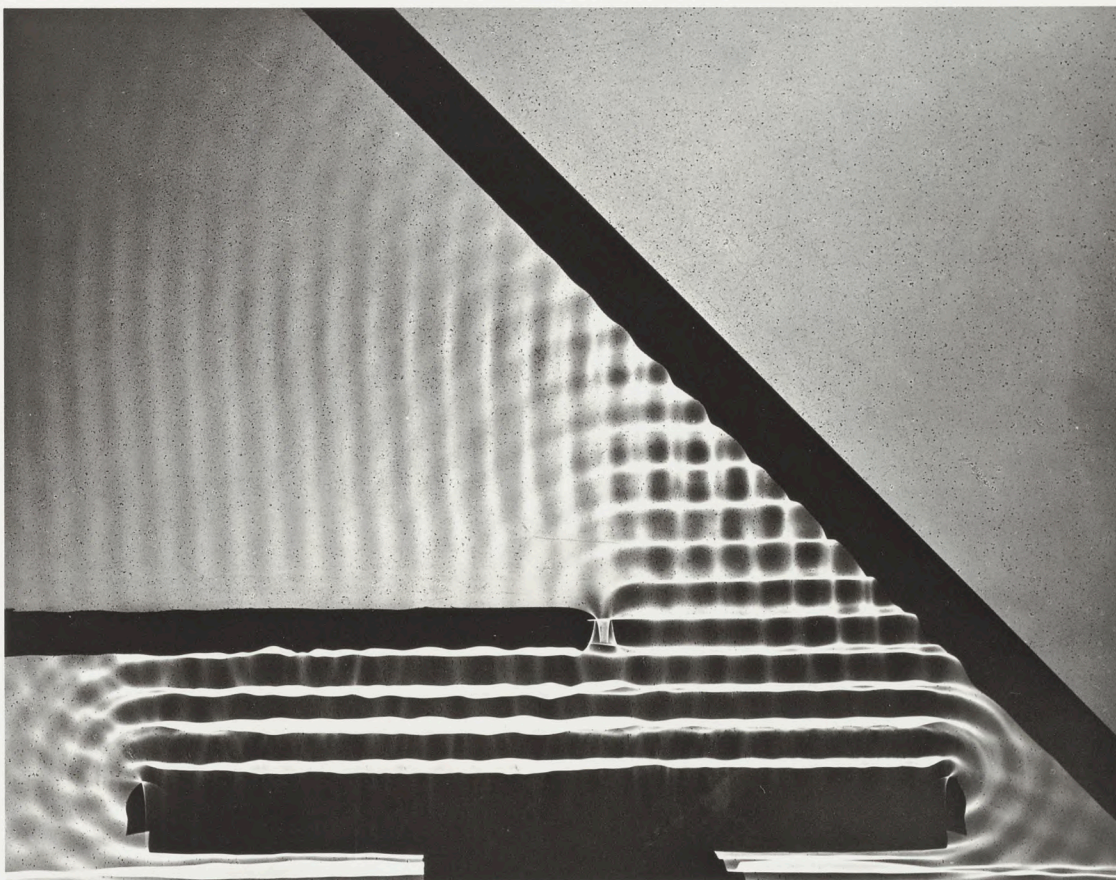


Plate 38  
*Multiple Beams of Light*  
 1958–60  
 (checklist number 152)

Plate 39  
*Reflected Water Waves*  
 1958–60  
 (checklist number 147)



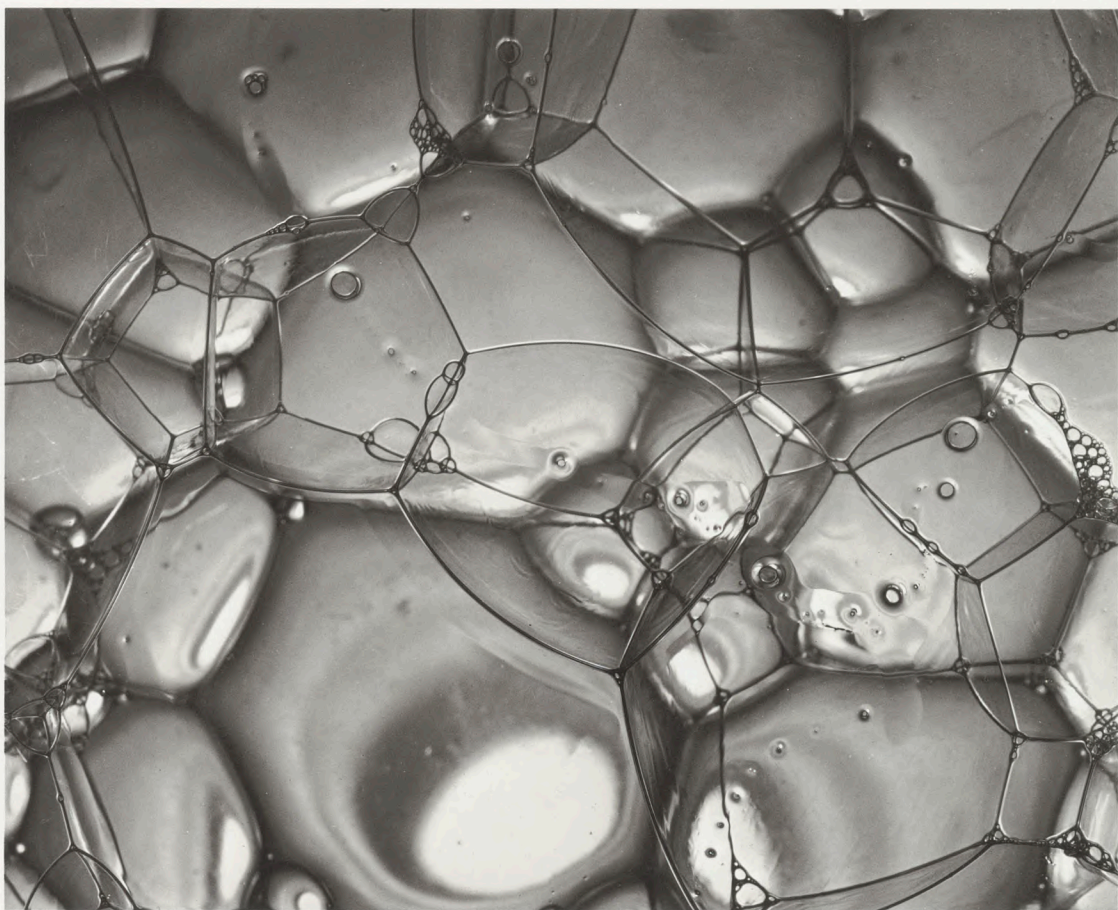


Plate 40  
*Interference of Waves*  
1958–60  
(checklist number 146)

Plate 41  
*Soap Bubbles*  
1946  
(checklist number 135)

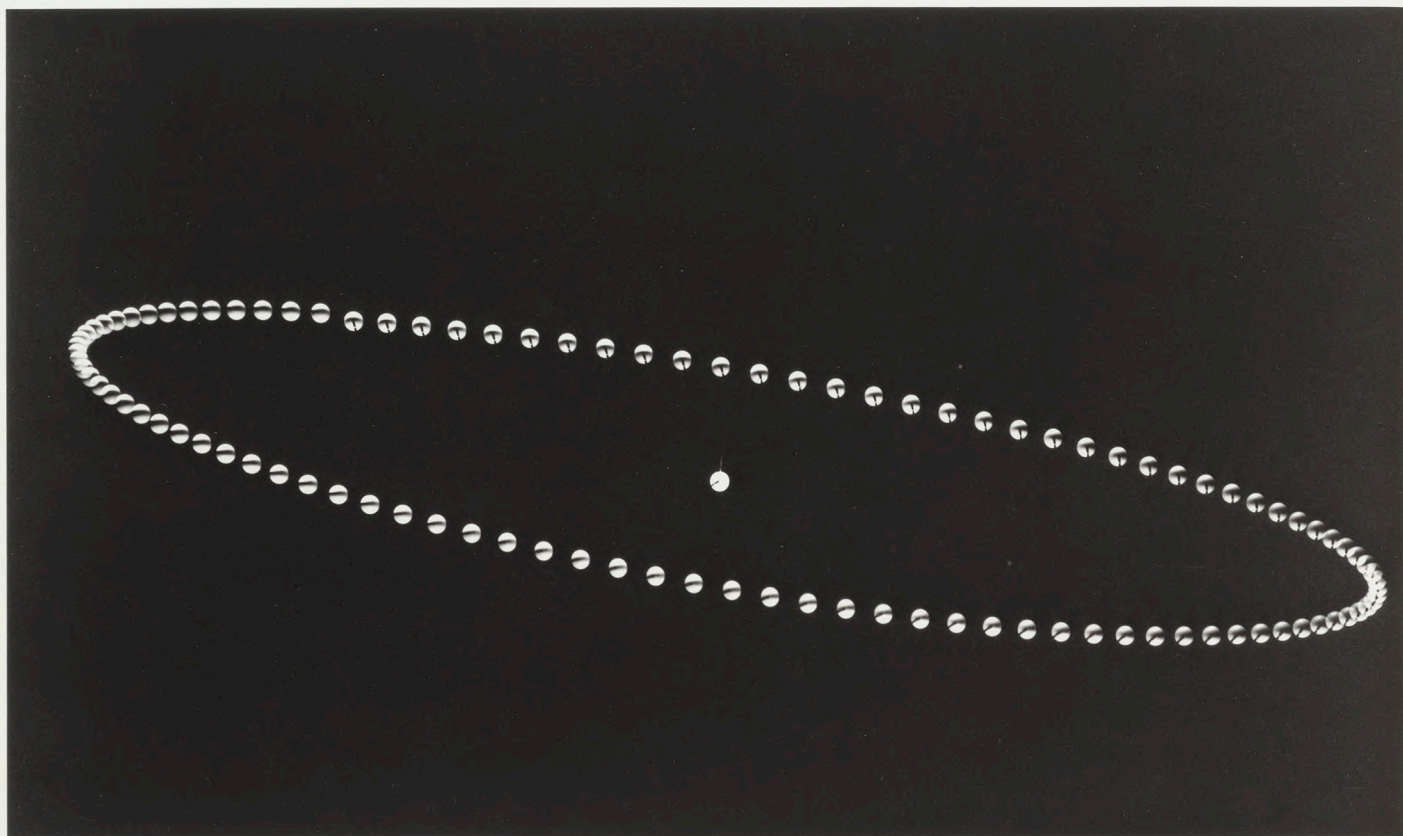
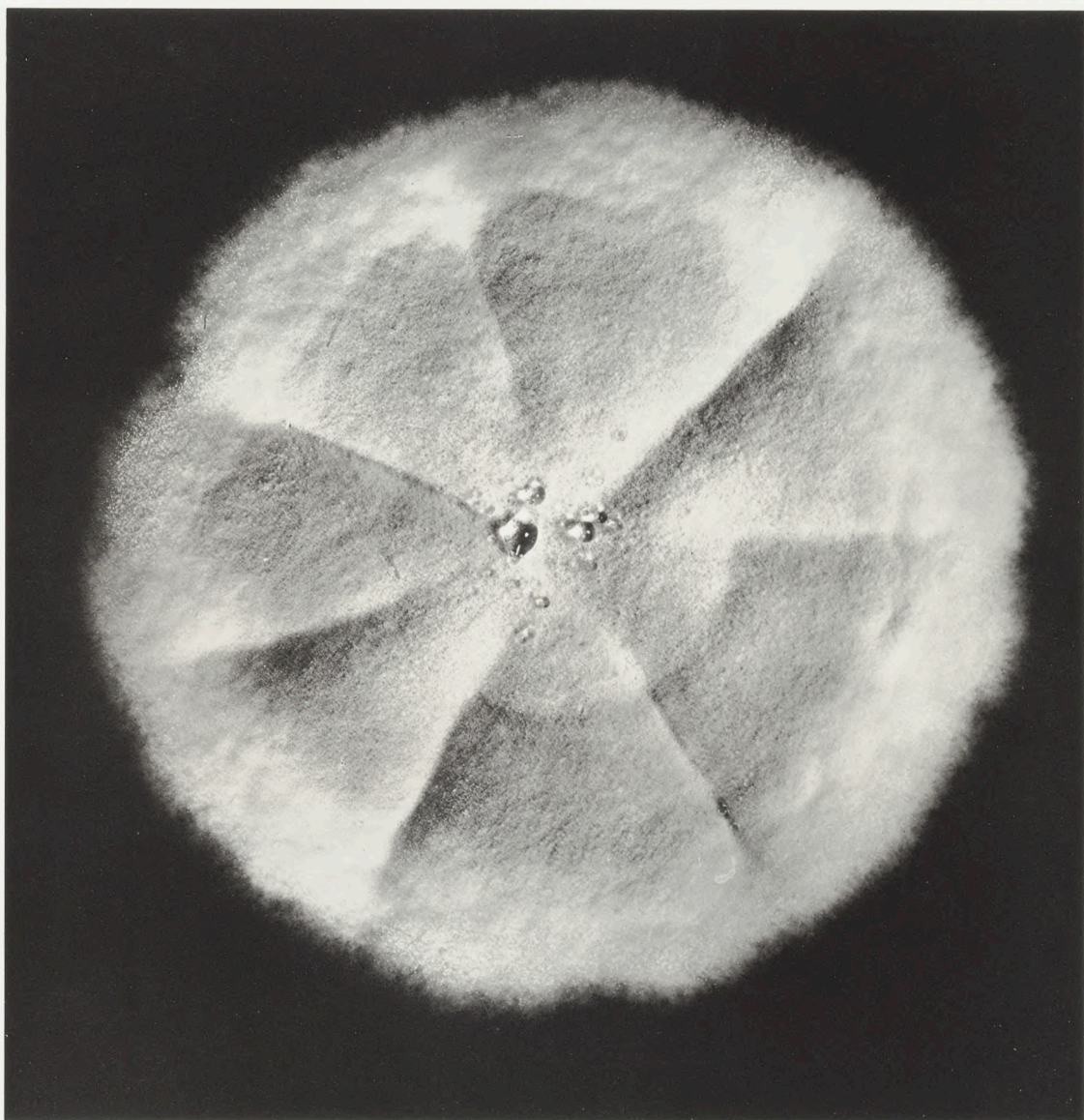


Plate 42  
*Multiple Exposure of a  
 Swinging Ball in an Elliptical  
 Orbit*  
 1958-60  
 (checklist number 157)

Plate 43  
*Penicillin Mold*  
 1946  
 (checklist number 134)



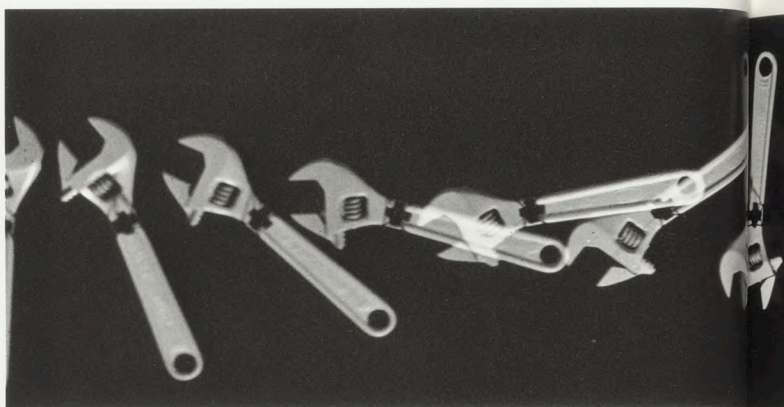
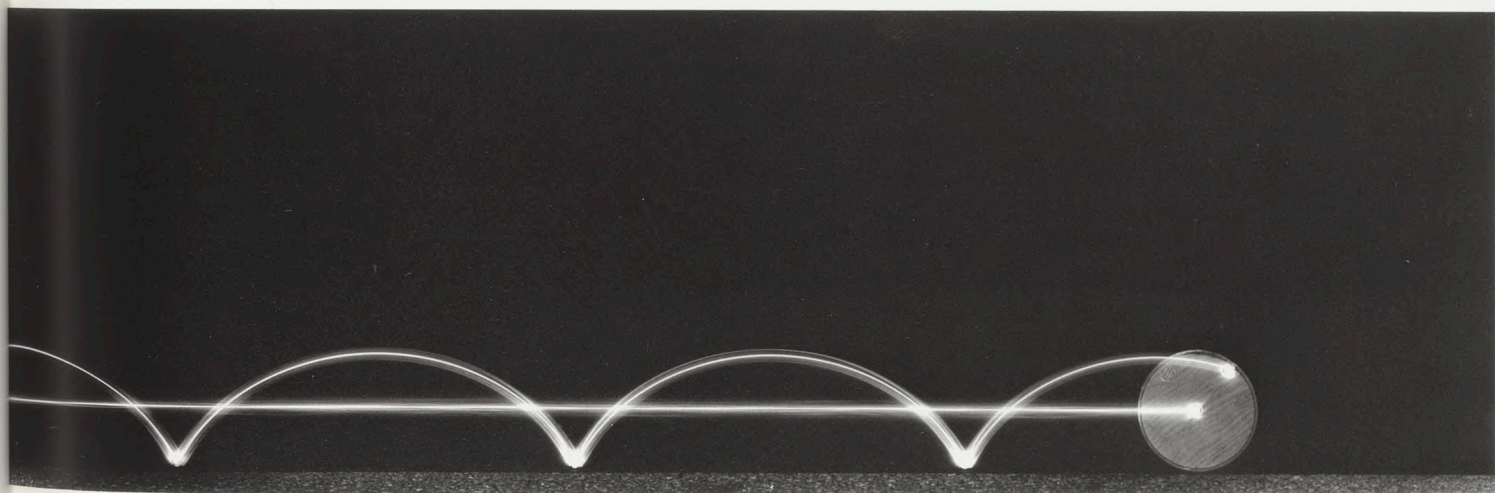


Plate 44  
*Spinning Wrench*  
 1958–60  
 (checklist number 151)

Plate 45  
*Cycloid; a Light Trace by  
 Time Exposure*  
 1958–60  
 (checklist number 158)





## AMERICAN SCENES

Plate 46  
*U.S. I Rubenstein's Antiques,*  
*Rockland, Maine*  
1954  
(checklist number 181)

On two occasions during 1934/35, Abbott ventured outside New York City to photograph. In 1934 the noted American architectural historian Henry Russell Hitchcock entrusted to her the photography for two projects. One concerned pre-Civil-War architecture, the other the buildings of Boston architect H. H. Richardson in the cities of the Atlantic seaboard. To both subjects Abbott brought some of the style acquired in photographing New York's complex interplay of surfaces and discordant vistas.

In the summer of 1935—not at all certain that her New York project would be funded—Abbott traveled with her friend Elizabeth McCausland through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and farther south. Their goal to see America and perhaps to develop a project involving the nonurban areas of the Eastern seaboard was realized twenty years later, in 1954, when Abbott traveled the length of U.S. I in order to photograph its vanishing small-town life and the new roadside architecture of the emergent automobile culture. Although this important documentary work shares with all of Abbott's thematic photography a powerful unity of viewpoint in its classical realism, these images of the pre-interstate highway that still snakes along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida were not widely known in their day. Now, however, the individual images are beginning to perform the interpretive historical role Abbott envisioned for them. She continued to photograph in Maine before moving there permanently in the late 1960s; written with Chenoweth Hall in 1968, her last book is a portrait of her adopted state.

J.V.H.

**"It Has to Walk Alone"** Berenice Abbott

The greatest influence obscuring the entire field of photography has, in my opinion, been pictorialism. But first let me define it: pictorialism means chiefly the making of pleasant, pretty, artificial pictures in the superficial spirit of certain minor painters. What is more, the imitators of these superficial qualities are not aware of the true values for which painting strives. Photography can never grow up if it imitates some other medium. It has to walk alone; it has to be itself.

If a medium is representational by nature of the realistic image formed by a lens, I see no reason why we should stand on our heads to distort that function. On the contrary, we should take hold of that very quality, make use of it, and explore it to the fullest. It is possible that the subject matter best suited to that characteristic quality be the one dictated by it.

After the early pioneer days of photography, which were very creative and healthy, a wave of rank pictorialism set in and flourished. This type of work was usually very sentimental. Its settings were staged; and the system was to flatter everything. These limitations of painting, catering to the worst Victorian standards, are familiar to most of us. The man most responsible for the whole movement was Henry Peach Robinson, an Englishman who was very successful financially, and who exported the mania to this country where it was gobbled up by Americans. The word "salon" descended from Robinson, and the "salon" print is still rampant in American camera clubs.

But there are always two sides to the question, and perhaps there always will be. In those days there was, fortunately, another side of the picture. Men like Mathew Brady, William H. Jackson, Sullivan, Gardner, and others were making magnificent realistic pictures of their world and of their time.

At the beginning of the century serious photographers were rightfully disdainful of Robinson and his followers. They graduated to a more refined or elevated grade; they became the fellow travelers of the more modern painters. They were interested in proving that photography was art with a capital "A" and they were quite touchy about it. Their work was spiked with mystical and subjective overtones. Terms like "equivalents," "hand of God," etc., were used to bewilder the layman.

Art was by the few, for the few, and cultural America was represented by the back end of a horse to people who did not know that they were being insulted.

These photographers raised the craft, as such, to a higher technical level with their reverence for glorified technique. The United States was wedded to technology and was favorably inclined toward a technological art. In the case of Stieglitz, who was an institution within himself, and who was God to many, and to many others not at all, he did make, when he ventured outside himself, a few great pictures. In Stieglitz' time what was unquestionably an advance in pictorialism is not an advance in 1950.

These latter-day pictorialists did not know that they were pictorialists. They were what I can only call, for lack of a better word, the advanced or super-pictorial school. The individual picture, like a painting, was the thing. Above all, the perfect print. Subjectivity predominated.

About this same period another man was working quietly unknown, unappreciated, but with a profound love of life. With concentrated energy and mature discernment, this man came to photography in the second half of his life. His name was Eugène Atget. He gave the world hundreds of great photographs. He was very busy and excited in discovering photography and what it meant. He didn't talk much; his time was spent penetrating and recording his immediate and wonderful world. His work is purely and entirely photographic, and it is still comparatively little known today.

While not of the same stature or range, another photographer on this side of the ocean showed remarkable photographic acumen in the early half of this century. I believe the true photographer is a curiously odd type of species, not easy to define, but his photographic gift is a highly charged and trained vision. This vision is focused, by the nature of the medium, on the here and now. Realist *par excellence*, inescapably contemporary, Lewis Hine had this photographic gift. He responded to the world around him, armed with a camera and his penetrating eagle-like, agile, but disciplined eye. Stieglitz and his disciples looked down their noses at Lewis Hine and fell in line with the coterie of Katherine Dreier's gallery. It was about that time (1918) that the abstractions of cracked paint began.

At the risk of over-simplification I propose that there is a third fling of pictorialism—the abstract school—the imitators of abstract painting, the photographers of the pure design, the cracked window pane, or the cracked paint. I think this represents the end.

Now they would be like the great painter Mondrian. Recently I have even seen would-be Jackson Pollocks. But instead of spattering paint at a canvas, in desperation they might yet resort to ripping the emulsion off the paper or spattering a print with hypo. Anything goes.

Why do I concern myself with these problems? Because it affects me, and other photographers, if, due to a preponderant amount of this type of work, it holds back sorely needed improvements of the instruments we need to work with. This is why I must take issue with the pictorialists. They are the ones who choose the subjects which are so easily expressed within the primitive limitations of present-day, backward equipment.

This brings me to the vast amateur field, and finally to the serious photographer. Photography is very young. Writing is very old. Everybody writes but they know they are not writers. Everybody photographs, but they don't realize that they are not photographers. On the positive side, the amateur market presents the possibility for the development of a great democratic medium—photography by the many and for the many. It is also a potential source for the development of professional photographers. This vast potential is rich, uncultivated soil, but it can erode away if it is flooded by pictorialism. The amateurs imitate the pictorialists because this is the line of least resistance, and they delight the manufacturers' with their prodigal use of film, paper, and cheap cameras. The result is a mass production type of photography, limited in subject material, hackneyed in approach.

But the serious photographer is a forgotten man. He is sorely in need of far-reaching improvements in all directions and over the entire field. He is living in a dynamic time and place, working with Model T cameras and outmoded sensitive materials. Photography does not stand by itself in a vacuum; it is linked on the one side to manufacturers of materials and on the other side to the distributors of the product, that is, to publishers, editors, business leaders, and museum

directors, and to the public. Unless they do their share of growing up to their responsibilities the photographer can languish or take up knitting. What we need of equipment is this: let it possess as good a structure as the real-life content that surrounds us. We need more simplifications to free us for seeing. And we need editors and publishers who will try to understand photography and who will live up to their responsibility to raise the general cultural level of our country which we, who love America, believe in for its great potential. We need a creative attitude on the part of the manufacturer, the distributor, and the consumer.

I should like to give a quotation from Goethe who was discussing a poet. Said Goethe: "He was a decided talent, without doubt, but he has the general sickness of the present day—subjectivity—and of that I would fain heal him." Does not the very word "creative" mean to build, to initiate, to give out, to act—rather than to be acted upon, to be subjective?

We know that all arts are related in varying degrees. I believe that the affinity of photography to writing is strong. In our country we have a glorious tradition of unsurpassed realist writers. A photographer could easily have worked hand in hand with the beloved Mark Twain, with Theodore Dreiser or Sherwood Anderson, with Walt Whitman or Hart Crane. Jack London, in his powerful novel "Martin Eden," pleads not only for realism, but for impassioned realism, shot through with human aspirations and faith, life as it is, real characters in a real world—real conditions. Is this not exactly what photography is meant to do with the sharp realistic image-forming lens?

The photographer explores and discovers and reacts to the world he lives in. His selectivity is the key, but the choice is one of discernment. The subject matter has no limitation. He can show the works and product of man as well as man himself. He can show equally the work of nature, from the skies to the ocean depths. Living photography builds up, does not tear down. It proclaims the dignity of man. Living photography is positive in its approach; it sings a song of life—not death.

(1951; excerpted from a paper presented by Berenice Abbott at a conference on photography at the Aspen Institute, Colorado)





Plate 47  
 Chester Fishtail Palm  
 (*Carysta mitis*), Fairchild  
 Tropical Gardens, Miami,  
 Florida  
 1954  
 (checklist number 174)

Plate 48  
 Fruit Market, South Dixie  
 Highway, Miami, Florida  
 1954  
 (checklist number 175)

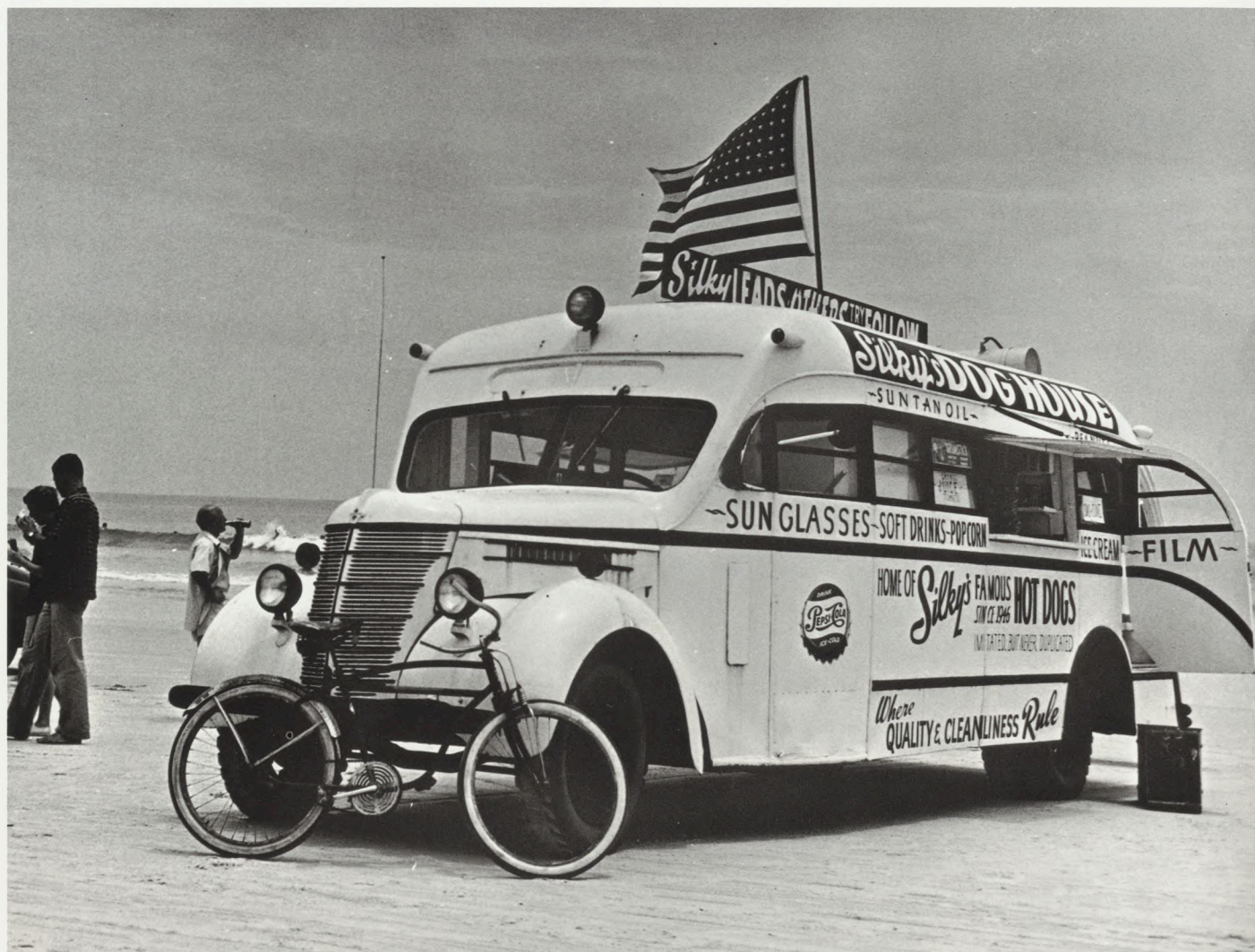


Plate 49  
Silky's Dog House, Daytona  
Beach, Florida  
1954  
(checklist number 173)



**1898 July 17**

Born Springfield, Ohio

**1917–18**

Attends Ohio State University

**1918–23**

Studies sculpture in New York, Paris, and Berlin

**1923–25**

Joins Man Ray's studio and begins to photograph

**1926 June**

First solo exhibition

**1927**

Photographs Eugène Atget

**1928 October**

Purchases Eugène Atget archive from his executor

**1928–29**

Exhibits with modernist photographers in Paris, Brussels, Stuttgart ("Film + Foto"), and Essen ("Fotografie der Gegenwart"/Photography of the Present)

**1929 February**

Visits New York and decides to return permanently

**1929**

Commercial work in New York for *Fortune*

**1931**

Takes up 8-x-10-inch view camera

**1934**

Photographs urban architecture of Eastern seaboard for Henry Russell Hitchcock

**1934 October**

First solo exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York

**1935 Summer**

With Elizabeth McCausland, travels and photographs in Midwest and South

**1935 September**

Begins Federal Art Project "Changing New York"

**1935–58**

Teaches photography at the New School for Social Research

**1939**

*Changing New York* published, project draws to close

**1939 Fall**

Drafts memo to self about photography and science

**1940s**

Develops photogram method of wave photography

**1941**

*Guide to Better Photography* published

**1942 March/April**

Devises the Projection-Supersight system of photography

**1943 August**

Photographs Red River Logging Company, California

**1944–46**

Associated with *Science Illustrated*

**1947–58**

The House of Photography Inc. exists to market inventions

**1949**

*Greenwich Village Today and Yesterday* published

**1954 Summer**

Photographs along route of U.S. No. 1

**1956**

Buys property in Maine

**1958–60**

Photographs for the Physical Science Study Committee

**1960s**

Publishes three books of scientific photographs

**1966**

Relocates permanently from New York City to Maine

**1968**

*A Portrait of Maine* published

**1968**

Museum of Modern Art purchases Atget archive

**1969/1970**

Retrospective exhibitions at the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art

**1976**

First portfolio published

## CHECKLIST

This checklist includes items in the exhibition "Berenice Abbott, Photographer: A Modern Vision," presented at The New York Public Library, October 7, 1989–January 6, 1990. The traveling exhibition includes New York Public Library items from the four sections ending with item 182; materials from other institutions and collections, and New York Public Library items in the Appendix, are not represented in the traveling exhibition.

All photographs by Berenice Abbott are gelatin silver prints.

Negative numbers are provided for photographs from the Federal Art Project, "Changing New York"; these numbers, indicated by a number sign (#), precede the date in the entry.

Titles in brackets have been supplied by the exhibition curator.

Items illustrated in this publication are identified by a plate number at the end of the entry.

### Portraits

#### 1

*Buddy Gilmore*  
Paris, 1927; later print,  $9\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{15}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 6

#### 2

*Claude McKay*  
Paris, 1926,  $6\frac{7}{8} \times 5$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### 3

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*  
New York, ca. 1930,  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{15}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 3

#### 4

*Eugène Atget*  
Paris, 1927,  $9\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 4

#### 5

*James Joyce*  
Paris, 1928,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 2

#### 6

*James Joyce*  
Paris, 1928; later print,  $8\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### 7

*André Gide*  
Paris, 1927,  $9 \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### 8

*Hands of Jean Cocteau*  
Paris, 1927,  $4\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 5

#### 9

*Jean Cocteau*  
Paris, 1927; later print,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### 10

*George Antheil*  
Paris, 1928,  $9\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### 11

*Huddie Ledbetter (Leadbelly)*  
New York, late 1940s,  $9\frac{7}{16} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 7

#### 12

*Marie Laurencin*  
Paris, 1926,  $8\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs  
Wallach Fund Purchase 1989  
Plate 1

#### 13

*Gwen LeGallienne*  
Paris, 1925,  $9\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**14**

*Nora Joyce*

Paris, 1928, 9¾ × 7⅞ in.

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**15**

*Princesse Eugène Murat*

New York, 1930, 12⅞ × 10½ in.

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**16**

*René Crevel*

Paris, 1928, 3¾ × 3⅞ in.

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**17**

*Mme. Théo van Rysselberghe*

Paris, 1926, 9¼ × 6⅞ in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Wallach Fund Purchase 1989

**18**

*Lewis Hine at Home*

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., 1938, 5⅜ × 4¾ in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Wallach Fund Purchase 1989

**19**

*José Clemente Orozco*

New York, early 1930s, 9 × 8 in.

Collection of Jules Baum, M.D.

Courtesy Robert Klein Gallery

**20**

*Janet Flanner*

Paris, ca. 1928; later print, 9¾ × 7½ in.

Collection of Susan Blatchford

**21**

*Djuna Barnes*

Paris, 1925–26, 4 × 2½ in.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts  
Washington, D.C.

Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay

**22**

*Romana Javitz*

New York, ca. 1945, 3⅞ × 3¼ in.

Collection of Philip Yampolsky

**23**

*Malvine Javitz*

New York, ca. 1945, 9½ × 7 in.

Collection of Philip Yampolsky

**24**

*Sylvia Beach*

Paris, 1926, 9 × 6⅞ in.

Princeton University Library

Sylvia Beach Papers

**25a–d**

*James Joyce*

(4 portraits)

Paris, 1926, each approx. 9⅞ × 6¾ in.

Princeton University Library

Sylvia Beach Papers

**26**

*John Cowper Powys*

Paris, ca. 1927, 9⅞ × 7⅞ in.

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**27**

*Elizabeth McCausland*

Springfield, Massachusetts, ca. 1935, 9⅝ × 7¼ in.

Collection of Ella Freidus

**28**

*Isamu Noguchi*

New York, 1948, 9⅜ × 6⅞ in.

Collection of Ella Freidus

**29**

*Max Ernst*

New York, 1941, 9¼ × 7¼ in.

Gilman Paper Company Collection

**30**

*Louis Eilshemius*

New York, ca. 1930, 13⅝ × 9¾ in.

Gilman Paper Company Collection

**31**

*Jane Heap*

Paris, ca. 1928, 9½ × 7⅞ in.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Gift of Laura May Isaacson 1976

**32**

*Margaret Anderson*

Paris, ca. 1928, 9¼ × 7½ in.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Gift of Laura May Isaacson 1976

**33**

*Edward Hopper*

New York, 1948

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Purchase, Joseph and Evelyn Isaacson Fund, Inc.

Gift 1970

**34**

*East Side Portrait*

New York, 1932,  $9\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**35**

*John Sloan*

New York, 1948,  $9\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**36**

*Bronja Perlmutter*

Paris, ca. 1926,  $8\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**37**

*Philip Evergood*

New York, 1940s,  $18\frac{5}{8} \times 12\frac{5}{16}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**38**

*Tylia Perlmutter*

Paris, ca. 1926,  $3 \times 4\frac{1}{8}$  in.

Private Collection

**39**

*Frank Lloyd Wright*

New York, early 1950s,  $7\frac{7}{16} \times 9\frac{17}{32}$  in.

Centre Canadien d'Architecture/

Canadian Center for Architecture, Montreal

Collection d'Architecture

## **New York City**

### **Pre-Federal Art Project, 1929–35**

**40**

*Exchange Place from Broadway, Manhattan*

1933; recent print,  $19\frac{1}{16} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1988

**41**

*Rockefeller Plaza; Structural Detail of the RCA Building*

1931/32,  $9\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Plate 20

**42**

*Rockefeller Plaza; Structural Detail of the RKO Building and the Rock Supporting West 50th Street*

1931/32,  $9\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{16}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

**43**

*New York at Night. Empire State Building, 350 Fifth Avenue, West Side, 34th and 33rd Streets (General View North), Manhattan*

ca. 1932,  $6\frac{5}{16} \times 4\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Plate 9

**44**

*New York Stock Exchange*

ca. 1933; recent print,  $22\frac{7}{8} \times 19\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**45**

*New York at Night*

ca. 1932; recent print,  $36\frac{1}{8} \times 28\frac{7}{8}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**46**

*Statue of Liberty*

1931/32; later print,  $9\frac{5}{8} \times 7\frac{11}{16}$  in.

Private Collection

**47**

Representative sheet from Berenice Abbott's

1929/30 New York City album

1929/30

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Elisha Whittelsey Collection

Elisha Whittelsey Fund 1978

**48**

[View from El Tracks to Trucks, Showing Yuban Sign]

1929/30

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Gift of Emanuel Gerard 1977

**49**

[Mannequins]

1929/30,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  in.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Gift of Emanuel Gerard 1977

**50**

*Cherry Street, Manhattan. Brick houses of about 1825–35*

1934,  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection

Middletown, Connecticut

**51**

*35–45 Peck Slip, Manhattan. Brick buildings of about 1830–40*

1934,  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection

Middletown, Connecticut

**52**

*Fifth Avenue Coach Company*  
ca. 1932; recent print, 15 $\frac{5}{16}$  × 19 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.  
Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**53**

*Pennsylvania Station*  
before 1934; recent print, 23 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 18 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.  
Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**Federal Art Project, "Changing New York,"  
1935–39**

Unless otherwise noted the photographs in this section  
are untrimmed 8 × 10 inch contact prints.

**54**

*Lampport Export Company, 507–511 Broadway, Manhattan*  
#3, October 7, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**55**

*Country Store: Interior, Ewen Avenue, Spuyten Duyvil, NY*  
#12, October 11, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 35

**56**

*Newsstand, Southwest Corner of 32nd Street and Third  
Avenue, Manhattan*  
#15, November 19, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 27

**57**

*Oak and New Chambers Streets, Manhattan*  
#17, October 28, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**58**

*Tri-boro Barber School, 264 Bowery, Manhattan*  
#24, October 24, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**59**

*Blossom Restaurant, 103 Bowery, Manhattan*  
#26, October 24, 1935  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Plate 26

**60**

*Huts and Unemployed: West Houston and Mercer Streets,  
Manhattan*  
#36, October 25, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**61**

*Henry Street, Looking West from Market Street,  
Manhattan*  
#48, November 29, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**62**

*Cliff and Ferry Streets, Manhattan*  
#49, November 29, 1935, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 3 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**63**

*Seventh Avenue, Looking South from 35th Street,  
Manhattan*  
#55, December 5, 1935  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**64**

*Ferry, West 23rd Street, Manhattan*  
#60, December 23, 1935, 13 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 16 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 33

**65**

*Murray Hill Hotel: From Park Avenue and 40th Street,  
Manhattan*  
#63, November 19, 1935, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**66**

*George Washington Bridge, Riverside Drive and 179th  
Street, Manhattan*  
#65, January 17, 1936  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 16

**67**

*"El" Station Interior, Sixth and Ninth Avenue Lines,  
Downtown Side, Columbus Avenue and 72nd Street,  
Manhattan*  
#66, February 6, 1936  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 34

**68**

*Automat, 977 Eighth Avenue, Manhattan*

#69, February 10, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 28

**69**

*Columbus Circle, Manhattan*

#70, February 10, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 14

**70**

*Facade: 317 Broadway, Manhattan*

#72, March 6, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**71**

*Pike and Henry Streets, Manhattan*

#73, March 6, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 19

**72**

*"El," Second and Third Avenue Lines, Hanover Square and Pearl Street, Manhattan*

#75A, March 6, 1936, 16 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 13 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 15

**73**

*Court of the First Model Tenement in New York City, 1325–1343 First Avenue, Manhattan*

#76, March 16, 1936, 9 $\frac{5}{16}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Plate 24

**74**

*Fifth Avenue, nos. 4, 6, 8, Manhattan*

#87, March 6, 1936; recent print, 18 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 23 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

Plate 32 (reproduced from a print in The New York Public Library, Picture Collection Federal Art Project Collection)

**75**

*Traveling Tin Shop, Brooklyn*

#92, May 22, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**76**

*Warehouse, Water and Dock Streets, Brooklyn*

#93, May 22, 1936

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Plate 31

**77**

*Department of Docks and Police Station, Pier A, North River, Manhattan*

#97, May 5, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 30

**78**

*"Theoline," Pier 11, East River, Manhattan*

#110, April 9, 1936

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

**79**

*"El," Second and Third Avenue Lines, Bowery and Division Street, Manhattan*

#111, April 26, 1936

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

**80**

*Lyric Theatre, 100 Third Avenue, Manhattan*

#112, April 24, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**81**

*Brooklyn Bridge, Water and Dock Streets, Brooklyn*

#113, May 22, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**82**

*Stone and William Streets, Manhattan*

#116, May 12, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 12

**83**

*Willow Place, nos. 43–49, Brooklyn*

#124, May 14, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**84**

*Talman Street, nos. 57-61, Brooklyn*

#128, May 22, 1936

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**85**

*Fulton Street Fish Market, Manhattan*

#132, June 18, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**86**

*Gasoline Station, Tremont Avenue and Dock Street, Bronx*

#141, July 2, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 36

**87**

*Greyhound Bus Terminal, 33rd and 34th Streets between  
Seventh and Eighth Avenues, Manhattan*

#142, July 14, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**88**

*Waterfront: From Pier 19, East River, Manhattan*

#157, August 12, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**89**

*City Vista: West Street Looking East, Manhattan*

#158, August 12, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**90**

*Downtown Skyport, Foot of Wall Street, East River,  
Manhattan*

#162, August 12, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**91**

*"Watuppa," Pier 5, East River, Brooklyn*

#165, August 10, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**92**

*Sumner Healey Antique Shop, 942 Third Avenue,  
Manhattan*

#169, October 8, 1936

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**93**

*Manhattan Bridge: Looking Up*

#173, November 11, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 17

**94**

*Rhineland Row II: Seventh Avenue between 12th and  
13th Streets, Manhattan*

#179, October 29, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**95**

*Fourth Avenue, no. 154, Brooklyn*

#180, October 29, 1936; later print, 15 x 19 1/8 in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1988

Plate 29

**96**

*Church of God, 25 East 132nd Street, Manhattan*

#188, December 8, 1936

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**97**

*Bread Store, 259 Bleecker Street, Manhattan*

#199, February 3, 1937

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**98**

*Gunsmith and Police Department, 6 Centre Market Place  
and 240 Centre Street, Manhattan*

#204, February 4, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**99**

*Chicken Market, 55 Hester Street, Manhattan*

#206, February 11, 1937, 16 7/8 x 13 1/16 in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

Plate 23

**100**

*St. Mark's Church: Skywriting Spiral, 10th Street and  
Second Avenue, Manhattan*

#214, March 23, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Federal Art Project Collection

**101**

*Brooklyn Bridge, Pier 21, Pennsylvania Railroad, Manhattan*  
#225, March 30, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**102**

*Triborough Bridge, Manhattan: Steel Girders*  
#234, June 29, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 18

**103**

*Wm. Goldberg [Clothing Store], 771 Broadway, Manhattan*  
#239, May 7, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**104**

*Triborough Bridge, Manhattan: Cables*  
#241, June 29, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**105**

*Twenty-seventh Avenue, no. 805, Astoria, Queens*  
#244, May 15, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**106**

*U.S.S. Illinois and Wharf: Armory for Naval Reserves, West 135th Street Pier, Manhattan*  
#252, July 2, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**107**

*General View: From the Penthouse, 56 Seventh Avenue, Manhattan*  
#254, July 14, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 13

**108**

*Father Duffy, Times Square, Manhattan*  
#255, April 14, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project  
Plate 21

**109**

*Williamsburg Bridge, from South 8th and Berry Streets, Brooklyn*  
#257, April 28, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**110**

*Under Riverside Drive Viaduct at 125th Street and Twelfth Avenue, Manhattan*

#274, November 10, 1937

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**111**

*Hardware Store, 316 Bowery, Manhattan*  
#276, January 26, 1938

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**112**

*Facade, Alwyn Court, 174–182 West 58th Street and 911–917 Seventh Avenue, Manhattan*  
#283A, August 10, 1938, 16¾ × 14 in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**113**

*John Watts Statue: From Trinity Churchyard, Looking toward One Wall Street, Manhattan*  
#284, February 1, 1938, 16¾ × 13⅞ in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 22

**114**

*Steam + Felt = Hats, 65 West 39th Street, Manhattan*  
#285, March 1, 1938, 6⅝ × 6⅝ in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 11

**115**

*Rothman's Pawn Shop, 149 Eighth Avenue, Manhattan*  
#297, May 18, 1938

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection  
Plate 25

**116**

*Flam & Flam, 165 East 121st Street, Manhattan*  
#298, May 18, 1938

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Federal Art Project Collection

**117**

*Flatiron Building, 175 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan*  
#299, May 18, 1938; later print, 13½ × 10½ in.

The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1987

**118**

*Pingpank Barber Shop, 413 Bleecker Street, Manhattan*  
 #300, May 18, 1938  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**119**

*Old Post Office, Broadway and Park Row, Manhattan*  
 #301, May 25, 1938  
 The New York Public Library  
 The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
 and Photographs

**120**

*Harlem Street II: 422-426 Lenox Avenue, Manhattan*  
 #304, June 14, 1938  
 The New York Public Library  
 The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
 and Photographs

**121**

*Broadway to the Battery, Manhattan*  
 #L-6, May 4, 1938, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**122**

*Wall Street, Showing East River: From Roof of Irving Trust  
 Company Building, Manhattan*  
 #L-9, May 4, 1938, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 11 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**123**

*City Arabesque: From Roof of 60 Wall Tower, Manhattan*  
 #L-15, June 9, 1938, 9 $\frac{15}{16}$  × 7 $\frac{15}{16}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection  
 Plate 10

**124**

*Consolidated Edison Power House, 666 First Avenue,  
 Manhattan*  
 #L-31, November 13, 1938; later print, 9 $\frac{15}{16}$  × 7 $\frac{15}{16}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library  
 The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
 and Photographs  
 Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1987

**125**

*Tempo of the City I: Fifth Avenue and 44th Street,  
 Manhattan*  
 #R-I, May 13, 1938, 8 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection  
 Plate 8

**126**

*McSorley's Ale House, 15 East 7th Street, Manhattan*  
 no negative number; ca. 1937  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**Post-Federal Art Project  
 Photographs of New York City**

**127**

*Riker's Restaurant, Manhattan*  
 1948, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Romana Javitz Collection

**128**

*Cafe, Hotel Lafayette, Manhattan*  
 1948, 7 $\frac{7}{16}$  × 9 $\frac{7}{16}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Romana Javitz Collection

**129**

*50 King Street, Manhattan*  
 1948, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Romana Javitz Collection

**130**

*Christopher Street Shop, Manhattan*  
 1948, 14 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.  
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York

**131**

*Designer's Window, Bleecker Street, Manhattan*  
 1948, 14 $\frac{5}{8}$  × 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
 Private Collection

**132**

*Hacker's Art Books, Manhattan*  
 1948, 7 $\frac{3}{16}$  × 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
 Collection of Diane & Martin Ackerman

**133**

*Sub-Treasury Building (now Federal Hall National  
 Memorial), Manhattan*  
 1954/57; recent print, 19 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 15 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.  
 Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

## Science

### Pre-Physical Science Study Committee Photographs

#### I34

##### *Penicillin Mold*

1946,  $10\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 43

#### I35

##### *Soap Bubbles*

1946,  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{16}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 41

#### I36

##### [Bird's Wing, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $14\frac{7}{8} \times 19$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 37

#### I37

##### [Half Apple, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $14\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{3}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### I38

##### *Magnetism with Key*

1950,  $13\frac{5}{8} \times 10\frac{5}{8}$  in.

Private Collection

#### I39

##### *Van de Graaff Generator, Cambridge, Massachusetts*

1950, later print  $37 \times 29\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

#### I40

##### [Bug, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $18\frac{3}{8} \times 12\frac{3}{4}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

#### I41

##### [Walnut, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $16\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{15}{16}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

#### I42

##### [Eye (Muriel Rukeyser's), Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $13 \times 15\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

#### I43

##### [Fish Tail, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $14\frac{1}{16} \times 18\frac{11}{16}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

#### I44

##### [Fish Head, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{3}{4}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

#### I45

##### [Moth, Supersight]

mid-1940s,  $19\frac{1}{4} \times 15\frac{5}{16}$  in.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

### Physical Science Study Committee Physics Photographs

#### I46

##### *Interference of Waves*

1958–60; recent print,  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 9$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

Plate 40

(reproduced from a print

in The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection)

#### I47

##### *Reflected Water Waves*

1958–60,  $6\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

Plate 39

#### I48

##### *Water Waves Change Direction, and Slow Down in Shallow Water*

1958–60; later print,  $15 \times 17\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

#### I49

##### *Water Waves Produce Shadows*

1958–60,  $7 \times 7\frac{13}{16}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### I50

##### *Parabolic Mirror*

1958–60,  $9\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

#### I51

##### *Spinning Wrench*

1958–60; recent print,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{4}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs, Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1988

Plate 44

**152**

*Multiple Beams of Light*

1958–60; recent print

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

Plate 38, 15 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 19 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.

(reproduced from a print in The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Romana Javitz Collection)

**153**

*Bouncing Golf Ball*

1958–59, 18 × 15 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Private Collection

**154**

*Spheres of Unequal Mass Collide*

1958–60, 9 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Romana Javitz Collection

**155**

*The Conservation of Momentum*

1958–60, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 9 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Romana Javitz Collection

**156**

*Pendulum Motion and Galileo*

1958–60, 6 × 7 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Romana Javitz Collection

**157**

*Multiple Exposure of a Swinging Ball in an Elliptical Orbit*

1958–60, 5 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

The New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Romana Javitz Collection

Plate 42

**158**

*Cycloid; a Light Trace by Time Exposure*

1958–60; later print, 9 $\frac{9}{16}$  × 19 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1988

Plate 45

**159**

*Falling Bodies of Unequal Mass*

1958–60; later print, 19 × 5 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The New York Public Library

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1988

**American Scenes****160**

*Stone Bridge in the Fenway, Boston*

1934, 7 × 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

**161**

*70–73 Beacon Street, Boston. Granite houses of about 1835–40*

1934, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 9 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection

Middletown, Connecticut

**162**

*Dillaway Street to the Corner of Hollis Street, Boston.*

*Brick houses with brownstone trim of about 1850–55.*

*The Hollis Street Church at the rear is earlier*

1934, 9 $\frac{5}{8}$  × 7 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection, Middletown, Connecticut

**163**

*601–611 Mt. Vernon Place, Baltimore.*

*Brick and stucco houses with rich ironwork of about 1835–45.*

*The Peabody Institute in the rear is later*

1934, 8 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection

Middletown, Connecticut

**164**

*Bloomfield's, Richfield Springs, New York, of about 1845*

1934, 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

Davison Art Center Collection

Middletown, Connecticut

**165**

*Norris Dam, Anderson County, Tennessee*

1935; recent print, 23 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 19 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**166**

*Hoboken Train Yards, New Jersey*

1935; recent print, 26 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 35 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**167**

*Coal Miners, Jenkins, Kentucky*

1935; later print, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

**168**

*Shed Six, Red River Logging Company, California*  
1943

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
T.B. Walker Foundation Fund Purchase

**169**

*Sunlight and Bark, Red River Logging Company, California*  
1943

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
T.B. Walker Foundation Fund Purchase

**170**

*Telescoping Logging Truck, Red River Logging Company, California*  
1943

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
T.B. Walker Foundation Fund Purchase

**171**

*Pile of Junked Cars, West Palm Beach, Florida*  
1954; later print, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 12 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**172**

*Melbourne Hotel, Melbourne, Florida*  
1954; later print, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 19 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.  
Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**173**

*Silky's Dog House, Daytona Beach, Florida*  
1954; later print, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 13 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Gift of Ronald A. Kurtz 1987  
Plate 49

**174**

*Chester Fishtail Palm (Carysta mitis),  
Fairchild Tropical Gardens, Miami, Florida*  
1954, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 47

**175**

*Fruit Market, South Dixie Highway,  
Miami, Florida*  
1954, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 48

**176**

*Man Sitting on Old Slave Block, Fredericksburg, Virginia*  
1954, 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{9}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**177**

*Route U.S. No. 1, Baltimore, Maryland*  
1954, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 6 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**178**

*Sunoco Station, Trenton, New Jersey*  
1954, 14 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
Private Collection

**179**

*American Shops, New Jersey*  
1954, later print, 18 × 22 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.  
Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**180**

*House along Route U.S. No. 1, near Belfast, Maine*  
1954, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**181**

*U.S. 1 Rubenstein's Antiques, Rockland, Maine*  
1954, 7 $\frac{13}{16}$  × 9 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection  
Plate 46

**182**

*Milliken's General Store, Bridgewater, Maine*  
1954; recent print, 35 $\frac{7}{16}$  × 27 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
Commerce Graphics Ltd, Inc.

**Appendix:**

**Archival and Supplementary Materials**  
**Beginnings: New York and Paris**

**183**

Man Ray (1890-1976), American  
*Portrait of Berenice Abbott*  
New York, 1920; gelatin silver print, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
Princeton University Library, Sylvia Beach Papers

**184**

Man Ray (1890-1976), American  
*Portrait of H.D.*  
Paris, ca 1923; platinum print, 9 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Pageant of America Collection  
Gift of Herbert Brook 1986

**185**

Exhibition announcement (two copies)  
for "Exposition Berenice Abbott: Portraits  
Photographiques,"  
"Au Sacre du Printemps" gallery, Paris, June 8–20, 1926  
This was Abbott's first exhibition.  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**186**

Berenice Abbott  
[Five Views of Marcel Duchamp's *Large Glass* in  
Katherine Dreier's Apartment]  
New York, 1931, each approx.  $9\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
Private Collection

**187**

Catalogue of the exhibition  
"1er Salon Indépendant de la Photographie,"  
"Salon de l'Escalier," Paris, May 24–June 7, 1928  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**188**

"The Hats of Two Smart Parisiennes Make Fashion  
Points for Spring,"  
*Vogue*, March 1, 1927, p. 60  
Abbott's first published photographs  
appeared in *Vogue* in the issue of January 15, 1927;  
this issue marked her second appearance.  
The New York Public Library, General Research  
Division

**189**

*Film + Foto:*  
Catalogue of the Internationale Ausstellung  
des Deutschen Werkbundes, Stuttgart, 1929. [Stuttgart:  
Der Werkbund, 1929]  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Wallach Fund Purchase 1989

**Eugène Atget****190**

*The World of Atget.*  
Photographs by Eugène Atget. Text by Berenice  
Abbott.  
New York: Horizon Press, 1964  
The New York Public Library, General Research  
Division

**191**

Eugène Atget (1857-1927), French  
*Fête, avenue de Breteuil*  
1913; later gelatin silver print by Berenice Abbott,  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 9$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**192**

Eugène Atget (1857-1927), French  
*La Villette, fille publique faisant le quart, 19<sup>e</sup> Paris*  
1921; later gelatin silver print by Berenice Abbott,  $9\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**193**

Eugène Atget (1857-1927), French  
*Camion, Paris*  
1910; later gelatin silver print by Berenice Abbott,  $9 \times 6\frac{13}{16}$  in.  
The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
Romana Javitz Collection

**194**

*Atget, photographe de Paris.*  
Preface by Pierre MacOrlan. New York: E. Weyhe,  
1930  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Bequest of Elizabeth Timberman 1988

**New York, Pre-Federal Art Project****195**

"George Washington Bridge under Construction,"  
*Architectural Forum*, May 1930, p. 748-49  
These were among Abbott's earliest published  
photographs of New York.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**196**

*Murals by American Painters and Photographers.*  
New York: The Museum of Modern Art, [1932]  
This exhibition catalogue reproduces Abbott's photo  
mural for the Museum's first exhibition in its new  
quarters on West 53rd Street, which included work by  
Charles Sheeler and George Platt Lynes, among others.  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs  
Gift of the Museum of Modern Art 1932

**197**

"David Sarnoff," portrait by Berenice Abbott,  
*Fortune*, vol. 1, no. 1, February 1930, p. 82  
 The New York Public Library, Economic and Public  
 Affairs Division

**198**

Letter to Abbott, February 1, 1933,  
 from Philip Johnson of the Architecture Department at  
 The Museum of Modern Art,  
 in support of Abbott's New York photo document  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**199**

Letter to Abbott, January 25, 1933,  
 from Harding Scholle, Director of the Museum of the  
 City of New York, in support of Abbott's New York  
 photo document  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**200**

*The Urban Vernacular of the Thirties, Forties and Fifties:*  
*American Cities before the Civil War*  
 [exhibition catalogue]. Photographs by Berenice  
 Abbott.  
 Text by Henry Russell Hitchcock.  
 Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University, [1934]  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**201**

Gilbert Seldes, ed.  
*This Is New York: The First Modern Photographic Book of*  
*New York.*  
 New York: David Kemp, 1934  
 The New York Public Library, United States History,  
 Local History and Genealogy Division

**New York, Federal Art Project Period****202**

Berenice Abbott  
*Waterfront, South Street, Manhattan*  
 #32, October 25, 1935  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection,  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**203**

Berenice Abbott  
*Waterfront, South Street, Manhattan* [rough proof]  
 #32, October 25, 1935  
 Ink notations are keyed to the map (item 204)  
 and research sheets (item 205).  
 Museum of the City of New York, Prints and  
 Photographs Department

**204**

Hand-drawn key map showing camera angle  
 and photo's coverage for items 202 and 203 above,  
 1935/36  
 Museum of the City of New York, Prints and  
 Photographs Department

**205**

Research sheets reporting on individual buildings  
 1935/36  
 Museum of the City of New York, Prints and  
 Photographs Department

**206**

Verso of print, showing wet-stamp with places to enter  
 data and coding for subject files  
 The New York Public Library, Picture Collection  
 Federal Art Project Collection

**207**

Letter to Abbott, March 31, 1939, from I. N. Phelps  
 Stokes concerning *Changing New York* publication  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**208**

Berenice Abbott. *Changing New York.*  
 Text by Elizabeth McCausland.  
 New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1939  
 The New York Public Library  
 The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
 and Photographs

**Science****209**

*Filaments*,  
 reproduced in *Science Illustrated*,  
 vol. 5, no. 6, September 1944, cover  
 Abbott was illustrations editor for *Science Illustrated*  
 from 1944 to 1945.  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**210**

"Berenice Abbott,"  
*Science Illustrated*, vol. 5, no. 6, September 1944, p. [58]  
 Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**211**

Physical Science Study Committee  
*Physics*. Boston: Heath, [1960]  
 This is the first edition of the seminal textbook for  
 which Abbott did photography.  
 The New York Public Library  
 Science and Technology Research Center

**212**

Physical Science Study Committee  
*Physics Laboratory Guide*. Boston: Heath, [© 1960]  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**213**

Evans G. Valens.  
*The Attractive Universe: Gravity and the Shape of Space*.  
Photographs by Berenice Abbott.  
Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing  
Company, 1969  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**214**

Evans G. Valens. *Magnet*.  
Photographs by Berenice Abbott.  
Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing  
Company, 1964  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**215**

Evans G. Valens. *Motion*.  
Photographs by Berenice Abbott.  
Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing  
Company, 1965  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

### **Books**

**216**

Berenice Abbott. *A Guide to Better Photography*.  
New York: Crown Publishers, 1941  
The New York Public Library  
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints  
and Photographs

**217**

Berenice Abbott. *New Guide to Better Photography*.  
New York: Crown Publishers, 1953  
Collection of Morris Engel

**218**

Berenice Abbott. *The View Camera Made Simple*.  
Chicago: Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, 1948  
Private Collection

**219**

*Greenwich Village, Today & Yesterday*.  
Photographs by Berenice Abbott.  
Text by Henry Wysham Lanier.  
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949  
The New York Public Library, United States History,  
Local History and Genealogy Division

**220**

*A Portrait of Maine*.  
Photographs by Berenice Abbott.  
Text by Chenoweth Hall.  
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968  
The New York Public Library, United States History,  
Local History and Genealogy Division

**221**

Carl Sandburg. *Poems of the Midwest*.  
Photographs edited by Elizabeth McCausland.  
Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing  
Company, 1946  
This edition included a photograph by Berenice Abbott.  
The New York Public Library, General Research  
Division

### **Inventions by Berenice Abbott, through her corporation The House of Photography**

**222**

Photographer's "carry-all" jacket, for men and women  
1947  
This multi-pocket, safari-type cotton canvas jacket is a  
prototype fabricated for use in marketing the idea to  
potential manufacturers; sewn for Abbott by Romana  
Javitz's mother, Malvine Javitz, a professional milliner and  
dressmaker.

Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**223**

Registered letter, dated January 23, 1947, describing  
item 222  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**224**

"Abbot Distorter": patent #2,565,446,  
August 21, 1951  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**225**

Working prototype of the "Unipod,"  
Abbott's one-legged collapsible camera stand, with  
photograph of W. Eugene Smith, 1947  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**226**

Registered letter, dated January 22, 1947, describing the  
"Unipod"  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**227**

"Thumb Camera": patent #2,860,556,  
November 18, 1958  
Collection of Ronald A. Kurtz

**Portraits of Berenice Abbott**  
**(gelatin silver prints except where**  
**indicated otherwise)**

**228**

Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven  
 (1875-1927), Danish  
*Berenice Abbott*  
 Berlin, ca. 1923, 8 $\frac{5}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.  
 Collage  
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, from the  
 Collection of Mary Louise Reynolds

**229**

Man Ray (1890-1976), American  
*Harlequin Composition with Berenice Abbott*  
 Paris, 1922, 8 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 6 $\frac{3}{16}$  in.  
 New Orleans Museum of Art, Museum Purchase

**230**

Man Ray (1890-1976), American  
*Berenice Abbott*  
 Paris, ca. 1925; later print, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
 Collection of Hank O'Neal

**231**

Berenice Abbott  
 [Self-portrait]  
 New York, ca. 1930; later print, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 10 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.  
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
 Acquired with funds provided by Frances Keech in  
 honor of Monroe Wheeler

**232**

Walker Evans (1903-1976), American  
*Berenice Abbott* (double exposure)  
 New York, ca. 1930, 4 $\frac{5}{16}$  × 2 $\frac{9}{16}$  in.  
 The Art Institute of Chicago, Department of  
 Photography  
 Gift of David C. and Sarajeon Ruttenberg 1988.396.18

**233**

Walker Evans (1903-1976), American  
*Berenice Abbott*  
 New York, ca. 1930, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 4 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  
 Collection of Hank O'Neal

**234**

Consuelo Kanaga (1894-1978), American  
*Berenice Abbott with View Camera*  
 New York, 1937, later print 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.  
 Collection of Susan Blatchford

**235**

Arnold Newman (b. 1918), American  
*Berenice Abbott*  
 New York, 1986, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.  
 Collection of Susan Blatchford

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*J.V.H.*



